

THE  
**CHRISTIAN JOURNAL,**  
AND  
**LITERARY REGISTER.**

No. 12.]

DECEMBER, 1820.

[VOL. IV.

*Annals of Scottish Episcopacy.* By  
the Rev. JOHN SKINNER, A. M. of  
Forfar.

(Continued from page 328.)

IN September, 1790, Mr. Park paid a visit to Scotland, and having spent some days in Aberdeen, Bishop Skinner had an opportunity of conversing with him on the subject which had so long, in a manner, engrossed the Bishop's whole thoughts. The result was, the strongest assurance on the worthy Barrister's part, that as soon as the new Parliament should be ready to enter on business, he, and his zealous fellow-agents, would renew their applications to those who had influence with people in power, and have the Bill introduced as early in the Session as possible. While in Edinburgh, Mr. Park was introduced to Principal Robertson, who gave him full power and authority to use his name, (and his name will ever be had in honour, both in the Established Church of Scotland and out of its pale), on every occasion where it was likely to promote the present views of his Episcopalian countrymen; "it being his decided opinion, that the Episcopilians in Scotland were well entitled to the relief they claim—an opinion which he would, if thought to have any weight, express to such of the English Bishops as were known to him." Testimony of the same kind was also repeated to Bishop Skinner, personally, by Dr. Campbell, of Aberdeen, a man of no less celebrity in the Scottish Establishment than the Historian of Charles the V. The Doctor, of set purpose, called on the Bishop, and wished to know whether there was any thing farther for him to say to the Bishop of Carlisle, which might satisfy his Lordship, and,

through him, the bench of Bishops at large, that the very suspicion of the measure of Repeal of the Penal Statutes proving offensive to the Established Church of Scotland was wholly groundless.

The new Parliament met this year in the month of November, to settle the business of the Spanish convention, which, with some other national concerns, occupied their whole attention until Christmas, when they adjourned to the beginning of February, 1791. As Bishop Skinner, however, drew up with his own hand, and printed, "A Narrative of the Proceedings relating to a Bill (actually) passed into a law, and entitled, 'An Act for granting relief to Pastors, Ministers, and Laypersons of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland,'" the Annalist of Scottish Episcopacy having already put the reader in full possession of every objection to the measure which was started, as well as of the convincing arguments by which those objections were repelled, thinks himself in duty bound to confine his account of the future procedure of the Bill to the words of the printed Narrative, which at the time was pronounced, by all concerned, a most correct and faithful detail of every fact and circumstance interesting either to the Scottish Episcopilians or to the public at large.

1791.] "During the Christmas recess, it was suggested to our Committee, that it might be proper for them to address the English Bishops, and solicit their good offices in obtaining relief to the Episcopilians in Scotland. Letters were, therefore, immediately written to the two Archbishops, and to all the other Prelates of the Church of England, requesting the honour of their Lordships' power-

ful interest and support to the application which was meant to be renewed, and in whatever way they should think most conducive to its success. Among the answers which came to these letters, it was particularly mentioned by Dr. Douglas, the Bishop of Carlisle, that he had, some time last year, forwarded to the Archbishop of Canterbury, letters from Principal Robertson, of Edinburgh, and Principal Campbell, of Aberdeen, recommending, in the most liberal terms, the cause of the Scottish Episcopalians, whose relief they had reason to think would be generally agreeable to the Church of Scotland. About the same time our friends in London informed us, that a conference had been obtained with the Lord Chancellor on the subject of our application, and a new Bill was to be framed in such terms as might be supposed to meet his Lordship's ideas. But owing to repeated delays, arising from unforeseen causes, it was again too late in the Session before this Bill could be properly introduced into Parliament; and, from the accounts of their proceedings, which were transmitted by the London Committee, it was abundantly evident that nothing had been omitted on their part, which was likely to ensure a favourable issue to the business entrusted to them. Every wise and prudent measure had been industriously pursued by these faithful agents, who still promised a continuance of their services, as long as they should be necessary, or acceptable to those concerned.

"Depending on these friendly assurances, the Preses of the Scottish Committee renewed his solicitations for an early and vigorous attention to the relief of the Episcopalians in Scotland, as soon as the Parliament should meet in 1792. He also took occasion to mention to the London Committee, a proposal which had been suggested by one of his colleagues,\* of procuring from some of the Royal Boroughs petitions to Parliament in favour of a Repeal of the Penal Laws, and exhibiting such a public mark of their approbation of this measure as might

show the expediency of it in a very satisfactory light. It was also proposed that application should be made to some of the Counties for the same purpose, especially to those in which the principles and conduct of the Episcopal Clergy and their hearers were best known. The consequence was, that, in a few weeks, petitions were transmitted to both houses of Parliament from the Counties of Stirling, Forfar, Kincardine, Aberdeen, and Banff; and from the Boroughs of Forfar, Brechin, Arbroath, Montrose, Inverbervie, Aberdeen, Banff, Forres, Nairn, and Dingwall, praying that such relief might be extended to those of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland as should seem expedient to the wisdom of the British Legislature. At the same time, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh very obligingly acquainted the public, that by the authority, and in the name of the Magistrates and Council, he had earnestly entreated the city's representative, Mr. Dundas, to give our Bill all the support and countenance in his power. Letters were written to the same purpose by the Freeholders of Moray, and the Magistrates and Council of the Boroughs of Elgin and Inverness, to their respective representatives in Parliament. The petitions from the above-mentioned Counties and Boroughs, intended for the House of Lords, were transmitted to the Earl of Kellie, one of the Sixteen Peers for Scotland, who was known to have exerted his influence, for some time past, in promoting the object of these applications.

"Matters being thus prepared for introducing our Bill into Parliament with some probability of success, it was intimated, as the opinion of our friends in London, that one of the Scottish Committee ought to be there, to attend the progress of the Bill through both houses; and application being made to Bishop Skinner for that purpose, he received a Delegation, signed by the other members of the Committee, empowering him to act in their names, and to take such measures as he might find expedient, and most likely to obtain the end in view. On his

\* Bishop Macfarlane, at Inverness.

arrival in London, he was informed by our agents there of the steps which had been taken for bringing our Bill into Parliament, and was particularly pleased to learn that Lord Grenville had promised to support it in the House of Lords, and to settle with Mr. Secretary Dundas into which of the two houses it should be first introduced. Finding things in this train, he was chiefly employed for two or three weeks in recommending the object of the Bill to the attention of some of the most distinguished members in both houses of Parliament. He took an early opportunity of paying his respects to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and was happy to find his Grace very friendly to the design of the Bill. He felt the same satisfaction in conversing with some of the other Bishops, and particularly with the Bishop of St David's, who had been at uncommon pains to make himself master of the subject, and of whatever related to the situation of the Scottish Episcopal Church. For some time past, his Lordship had beenconcerting measures with the Earl of Kellie, for bringing our business forward, and the favourable reception it met with in the House of Peers was chiefly owing to the good offices of these two noble Lords, who had been long and zealously endeavouring to set the matter in a true light, and to remove those prejudices and mistaken apprehensions, which some had entertained concerning it.

"Atlast, on Moday the 2d of April, the Earl of Kellie presented the several petitions from the Counties and Boroughs of Scotland above-mentioned, and moved for leave to bring in a Bill agreeably to the prayer of these petitions. Two days after, the Bill was read a first time, without any appearance of opposition on the part of the Chancellor, who only observed, that some alterations would be necessary. It was also ordered to be printed, and laid on the table at the meeting of the house after the Easter holidays, when the Lords would be summoned, and a day named for the second reading. During the recess, however, Bishop Skinner learned,

that the Lord Chancellor had been mentioning such difficulties about the Bill as were not likely to be easily removed, and the first day on which the House of Lords met, a conversation was held on the subject, in the course of which the Chancellor went over all his former ground of opposition, and particularly insisted, that, without a clause requiring the registration of orders, all sorts of people, even such as the Blacksmith of Gretna-Green, might assume the character of Episcopal Ministers, and in that character, if once tolerated, might celebrate marriages, and do other irregular acts. To this the Bishop of St. David's replied, that the Scottish Episcopal Clergy would very gladly register their orders, if the law would permit them; but the same act which required it, likewise declared it to be null and void; by which means these Clergy were precluded from the very possibility of qualifying themselves in a legal manner, and so laid under a species of persecution, to which the mildness of the British Government had never exposed any other class of its subjects. The Chancellor seemed also inclined to say something disagreeable about what he called the connexions of our Clergy with the Pretender, and had his doubts whether the Established Church of Scotland approved of our being put on an equal footing with the other Scottish Dissenters.

"On the first of these points, the Bishop of St. David's desired Bishop Skinner to state in writing the fact as it really stood, with regard to some consecrations which had taken place in our Church, soon after the death of the deprived Bishop of Edinburgh. And to remove all doubts about the other matter, he thought the best way would be, to apply for a repetition of the former assurances given by Principals Robertson and Campbell. Such application was no sooner made, than these assurances were renewed in the most friendly manner, with the addition of a letter to the Bishop of Salisbury from Dr. Gerard, of Old Aberdeen, bearing the same liberal testimony to the good wishes of

the Established Church in our favour.

" As to the other objection arising from the supposition that the successors of the deprived Bishops not only held a correspondence with the exiled family, but even acknowledged a dependence on it in the exercise of their spiritual authority, and were invested with the Episcopal character in consequence of a recommendation from the Pretender—our delegate found no difficulty in asserting that this was true only with respect to a very few of our Bishops at a very distant period, and that it could not be justly charged against the present Bishops, who never had any connexion with, or dependence on, the exiled family, either in obtaining or exercising their spiritual functions.\* The authority with which they are invested is not derived from any source that can in the least affect the safety of the State, or the security of the Government under which they live; and they can so far comply with the oath of Supremacy as to " testify and declare, that no foreign Prince, Prelate, State, or Potentate, hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this Realm."

" To this declaration our delegate added, on the part of our Bishops, a solemn disavowal of any pretensions to legal or temporal jurisdiction: the authority of our Clergy, he affirmed

\* On the death of the Bishop of Edinburgh, who survived the other ejected Prelates till the year 1720, it was proposed by a few of the Episcopal Clergy, that the same dependence should be acknowledged, and the same respect and submission paid to the exiled family, in matters of Ecclesiastical concern, which had been customary in the times of legal establishment. And on this plan a few promotions soon after took place, in consequence of recommendations from the exiled Prince. But it quickly appeared, that this scheme did not meet with the approbation of the Clergy in general, who considered it not only as dangerous, but in every respect improper; and in a few years afterwards all attempts to revive it were for the future prohibited by certain regulations, which have ever since been regarded as the standard of discipline in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

to be entirely of a spiritual nature, such as is necessary to the preaching of God's word, and the administration of his sacraments, and which can never interfere with the civil rights of the establishment. " All," said he, " which we presume to request of the British Legislature, is a share of that toleration, which others so freely enjoy, and the liberty of worshipping God, in conformity with the religious principles of that Church to which we belong; principles than which, corresponding as they do with those of the Church of England, none can be more favourable to his Majesty's Government, or to the peace and happiness of society."

This was the view in which Bishop Skinner endeavoured to represent the principles of our Church; and he had the satisfaction to find that they were seen in this just and proper light by many distinguished characters in the Church of England. The Bishop of St. David's was so well convinced of the propriety of granting us complete toleration, that he assured Lord Kellie, if it was judged advisable to push the second reading of our Bill at all events, he would come prepared to speak in its favour, and to combat all the arguments which could possibly be urged against it. With regard to the clause which was proposed, requiring the registration of our Clergy's orders, the Earl of Guildford observed, that, upon the general principle of toleration, there did not seem to be any necessity for inquiring into the nature of our orders, more than those of other dissenters; since it was of no consequence to the state what these orders were, or whence derived, if our religion was friendly to Government, and such as deserved to be tolerated. The Lords Kinnoul and Stormont were both of the same opinion, and saw no necessity for requiring the registration of our Clergy's orders, or that they should accept of such orders as could legally be registered. This appeared to them the more unreasonable, as no English or Irish Bishop could ordain a man, without what is called a title, and no such title could be obtained from Scot-

land. But to remove all objections arising from the illegal nature of a Scottish Episcopacy, it was thought that our Clergy might be described as "Dissenters from the Established Church of Scotland, who style themselves Episcopal Clergy;" and under that description it was presumed that no good reason could be assigned for denying us the same toleration which was enjoyed by all other Protestant dissenters in Scotland.

Confiding, therefore, in the reasonableness of our requests, and anxiously desirous that our cause might obtain a fair hearing, Lord Kellie moved the second reading of our Bill to be on Wednesday, the 2d of May, and that the Lords might be summoned for that purpose. A considerable number of the Peers attended the house that day, and some had intended to vote by proxy in support of the Bill. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York were both present, as were also the Bishops of London, Durham, Salisbury, St. David's, Oxford, Bangor, and Carlisle. The Earl of Elgin moved the second reading of the Bill, and, in a short but very sensible speech, stated the principle of it to the house, and the merits of those whom it was intended to relieve. His Lordship observed, that by the 10th of Queen Anne, the Pastors and Ministers of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland were made liable to very severe penalties, on proof of having omitted to pray for the Queen, and for other instances of non-conformity. Additional penalties were imposed by the 5th of George I. and the 19th and 21st of George II. the design of all which was to check the disaffection which was known to prevail at that time among the Episcopalians in Scotland. But this design, he was happy to say, was now sufficiently accomplished. At present, and indeed for several years past, his Lordship said, the Episcopalians in Scotland had given proofs of their being as zealously attached to the Sovereign on the Throne, and his family, and as firm in their allegiance, as any other class of his majesty's subjects; and, therefore, he could not but hope that their

Lordships would consider them as justly entitled to the relief which the present Bill provided, and which he would not have moved for, if he had not thought it a matter both of justice and expediency.

The Lord Chancellor then left the Woolsack, and began with declaring, that he would not object to the principle of this Bill, but he wished, and thought it his duty, to make some observations on it. He then proceeded to take an extensive view of the subject, and entered into a variety of reasoning on the nature of a church establishment, and the general principles of toleration; from which he inferred, that no sect ought to be tolerated but those whose principles were found to be such as deserved, and might safely be indulged with toleration. Those, he said, who imagined that any church could become the Established Church of a country, merely by the truth of its doctrines, or the force of its arguments, were mistaken, and contradicted by all history, and all experience. Let the doctrines be ever so pure, and the arguments ever so irrefragable, they could not make her the Established Church, unless she was politically recognized as such, and supported by the government of the country. This support consisted chiefly in providing plentiful and competent incomes for her pastors; and the distinction he now alluded to was clearly visible in the case of Scotland and England, in each of which countries the Established Church was different from the other, Presbytery being that supported in Scotland, and Episcopacy in England. In stating the nature of an establishment, he endeavoured to show, that it was absolutely necessary to the preservation of the Christian religion; and though he did not pretend to be deeply versed in ecclesiastical history, he was impressed with a notion, that, before the time of Constantine, it was not the practice of the Church to pray for kings, which, he supposed, was the model that had been proposed for the imitation of the Scottish Episcopalians. But they should have remembered, that ever since the days of Constantine, such prayers had

been deemed an essential part of public worship, and prescribed as such in all countries professing the Christian religion. Having stated this, his Lordship proceeded to take notice of the statutes which enacted penalties against the **Episcopilians** in Scotland, mentioning the 10th of Queen Anne, and the 19th and 21st of George II. He said he was far from defending the severities of those statutes. Let the political reasons have been what they might, he thought the penalties much sharper than even the circumstances of those times could justify; and, therefore, he could feel no disinclination whatever in granting the relief that was necessary, provided it was given under proper regulations; for he was far from wishing to harass any sect of Christians on account of their religion, much less those who professed to be of the **Episcopal** persuasion, since he himself was rather an **Episcopalian**. His Lordship then discussed what he took to have been the meaning of the Legislature in respect to the ordination of **Episcopalian** Pastors in Scotland. He again referred to Queen Anne's act of toleration, quoting with some emphasis the words, 'Pastors ordained by a Protestant Bishop,' from which he inferred, that to have been regularly ordained by some Protestant Bishop, (who, in his opinion, could be no other than an English or an Irish Bishop), and to have their ordination registered in the public registers, was meant to be understood as essential in point of form, and indispensable in substance. He dwelt for some time on this head, and contended for the necessity of a due attention to this part of the statute, as a test that these Pastors embraced and taught doctrines consonant to the principles of Christianity, and doctrines fit to be tolerated. In the course of his speech he recapitulated the conditions under which, by the existing statutes, the **Episcopilians** of Scotland were tolerated at present, and argued much on the necessity of their Pastors being able to establish the validity of their ordination; instancing the two solemnities of Baptism and Marriage as solemnities which they could not per-

form unless they were legally ordained. After repeating his favourable inclinations towards the **Episcopilians** of Scotland, professing himself to speak as an humble member of the Established Church of this country, and consequently as an individual who wished to treat those persons who were the objects of this Bill, with that degree of respect and decency which became men in every situation; and, after considering and arguing upon the whole of their case, his Lordship closed his speech with remarking, that as their principles of religion were not sufficiently known, or at least no public evidence was given what they were, or how far they deserved that indulgence which was intended by this Bill, he did not think it would be prudent to grant it on such a broad, unlimited footing, as it might open a door to many similar applications, and create much unnecessary trouble to the Legislature.

Lord Stormont then rose, and began with assuring their Lordships, that as there was no question before them, he was conscious it would ill become him to detain the house long. Whatever fell from the mouth of the noble and learned Lord, he said, had so much weight on the minds of noble Lords in that house, and with so much justice, that he begged to speak a few words in reply to some parts of the speech of the noble and learned Lord, and also shortly and simply to explain the principle on which he thought it his duty to support this Bill. His Lordship then proceeded to detail the grounds on which the penalties had been imposed that the present Bill went to repeal. When the statute of Queen Anne passed, their Lordships, he said, would recollect that the circumstances of the times were peculiar. Those of the **Episcopal** Communion in Scotland were then known to be disaffected to the Government of the country, from motives of conscience, not thinking themselves at liberty to withdraw their allegiance from the heir of the abdicated sovereign. On those persons, therefore, and on them only, it was that the statute was intended to attach. The case, however, at pre-

sent was totally different. There now existed no such description of persons as those who were the objects of that act. The Scottish Episcopalian of the present day were well affected to the government of their country, and prayed for his Majesty and the Royal Family, as formally, and as sincerely as those in England did. With respect to what the noble and learned Lord had said concerning toleration, Lord Stormont declared, he did not think it necessary to discuss that point, or to state his opinion on the subject. The noble and learned Lord, he observed, had said, that toleration ought to be extended to those persons only who were known to profess some principles of religion consonant to the doctrines of Christianity. It was, however, his Lordship remarked, a circumstance rather strong in favour of the objects of the present Bill, that the members of the Established Church of Scotland wished them to be relieved from the penalties in question, which, although certainly sharper than necessary under the present circumstances of the times, were perhaps justifiable at that period of our history when they were first imposed. In Scotland, his Lordship said, he should no doubt be deemed a dissenter; yet he could not but feel some degree of national pride on observing the liberal sentiments which the Established Church of Scotland had manifested on this occasion. With regard to what the noble and learned Lord had said respecting the necessity of every Episcopalian Pastor being able to prove that he had been regularly ordained by a Protestant Bishop of England or Ireland, Lord Stormont said, he must beg leave to differ entirely from his Lordship. If their Lordships would but attend for a moment, they would see that in many cases it was in its nature utterly impossible. If Episcopalian Pastors were men of conscience, as he hoped they were, they could not submit to receive a second ordination. And if they did, he would only ask how the case would stand in the eyes of their congregations. Their hearers might justly tell them, "You have passed upon us these twenty or thirty

years, for what you are not. You have preached to us, and we have listened to you; but we now at last find, that before this time you never were duly qualified." Besides, if these Episcopalian Pastors were to apply to a Bishop of England or Ireland, where would they get a title? If an Episcopalian candidate for orders were to say, "My friends in Scotland will procure a meeting-house for me, and provide for my support"—would any of the learned Prelates opposite to me, said Lord Stormont, pointing to the Bench, deem that a competent title? Most certainly not.

With regard to what the noble and learned Lord had said respecting marriage, it was well known, that in Scotland marriage was considered merely as a civil contract, as appeared from the frequent reports of what was transacted at Gretna-Green, a place where he had some concern; and if a Counsel were at their Lordships' bar, and attempted to bring a witness to prove that marriage was any thing else than what he had now stated it, he was persuaded the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, would immediately think it his duty to stop him. The validity of an Episcopalian Pastor's ordination, his Lordship contended, was totally out of the question. In considering the principle of the present Bill, the house had nothing to do with it; and if he held in his hand the book written by Father Courayer, some few pages of which he had once read, he declared he would not resort to the volume for a single argument in support of the doctrine he was then maintaining. The sole, and, as he had before stated it, the simple point on which rested the claim of the Episcopalian of Scotland to the relief which the Bill would give, was, that when the penalties complained of were imposed, they were clearly meant to attach on persons who were disaffected to the existing government of the country, and to the Prince upon the throne, whereas the present Episcopalian, both Pastors and Laymen, were persons of a totally different description. There was no occasion, his Lordship said, for him to go back to the reign

of Constantine to prove what Episcopacy was ; and, therefore, after apologizing to their Lordships for having detained them so long, he would conclude with declaring that it appeared to him an irrefragable argument in favour of the present Bill, that the Episcopalians of Scotland had exactly and precisely the same claims on the indulgence of the Legislature, as those of the dissenters in this part of the kingdom from the Established Church of England.

(*To be continued.*)

Extract from the *Journal of a recent Journey to Jerusalem*, by the Rev. James Connor.

I ARRIVED at Nazareth on Friday, the 25th of February, and remained there till the following Monday ; having visited, in the interval, all the Holy Places shown there, and the summit of Mount Tabor, two hours and a half distant from Nazareth. The number of the inhabitants of Nazareth is about 3,000. Of these about 500 are Turks, and the remainder are Schismatic Greeks, Latins, Greek Catholics, and Maronites. I have placed them here according to their rank in number.

The Guardian of the Latin Convent, where I lodged, told me, that the Turks and Christians of the neighbouring village of Cana of Galilee cherish a singular notion, in consequence of the miracle once performed there. They commonly suppose, that, by drinking copiously of the waters of the place, intoxication is produced.

On Monday, the 28th of February, we set out for Napolose. After passing the fine plain of Esdraelon, we arrived at the village of Gennin, situated at its extremity. We passed the night there in a miserable hovel, with two Christian Druses, who had come from their mountains to buy cotton ; they observed Lent very strictly.

The next morning we started with the dawn. The path led us, at first, through a narrow stoney valley. We had not proceeded far before we were met by an Arab, who cautioned us against advancing, as a company of

robbers were lying in wait on the hill-side, a little beyond us. We immediately turned, and took another road. We passed to-day through some fine country ; and arrived, about three in the afternoon, at Napolose, the ancient Sychem, beautifully situated at the foot of lofty hills, embosomed in trees, and surrounded with gardens. We were not permitted to advance into the town till we had seen the governor, who, after a conversation of two or three minutes, dismissed us. We took up our lodging in the house of a Greek Christian.

In Napolose there are about 100 Christians, all Greek Schismatics. They have one Church, and two Priests. The Jews there amount to about fifteen individuals.

I immediately made inquiry about the Samaritans. My host stepped out, and fetched their Priest : he sat with me some time : his name is Shalmorben-Tabiah : he is a native of Napolose, and is about forty years of age.

There are about forty Samaritans in Napolose. They have but one Synagogue in the town, where they have service every Saturday. Four times a year they go, in solemn procession, to the old Synagogue on Mount Gerezim ; and, on these occasions, they go up before sun-rise, and read the Law till noon. On one of these days they kill six or seven rams. The Samaritans have one School in Napolose, where their language is taught. The head of the sect resides in Paris.

I accompanied the Priest to his house, and sat a long time with him. There were several Jews present : They seem to live on friendly terms with the Samaritans here. The Priest showed me part of the first volume of the English Polyglott, mentioned by Maundrell : it consisted of about a dozen tattered leaves. He showed me also a Manuscript Samaritan Pentateuch, with an Arabic Version at its side. This Version, however, is not used in their Synagogue. He afterward took me to see the Synagogue, making me first take off my shoes : it is a small gloomy building. I observed a number of copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch, carefully enveloped in

linen, and laid on a shelf in the Synagogue. Expressing a wish to see the Ancient Manuscript, said by the Samaritans to be 3500 years old, the Priest paused and hesitated for some time. I pressed him. Having laid aside his upper garments, he at length entered the Sanctuary, and produced the venerated Manuscript. It is well written on vellum, in the Samaritan Character, and is preserved in a tin roller: it bears the marks of age, and is rather tattered. The Priest would not permit me, nor any one present, to touch it. He was very inquisitive about the Samaritans, who, he had heard, were in England.

The next morning we started for Jaffa; and arrived, about sunset, at the edge of a wretched village, called Gilgiuli. Here we were compelled to spend the night under an open shed. A band of Bedouins entered, and sat with our muleteers round the fire which we had kindled: they remained with us all night: their thievish character kept us watchful and sleepless.

We set off with the dawn; and, after having traversed a wide plain, consisting of cultivated land and blooming pastures, we entered Jaffa about noon, and proceeded, through its crowded Bazaars, to the house of our Consul, Signor Damiani. He received me in a very friendly manner, and I lodged with him during my stay in Jaffa.

The population of Jaffa consists of about 3000 Turks, 400 Greek Schismatics, 100 Latins, and 30 Armenians. There are no Jews here.

On Saturday, March the 4th, we set out for Rama, the ancient Arimathaea. We remained there till Monday, lodging in the Latin Convent. The inhabitants of Rama amount to 7000. The only Christian School in the place is that belonging to the Greeks.

On Monday morning we proceeded toward Jerusalem. After passing over a cultivated plain, we entered a broad valley; at the end of which, turning to the right, we rode along a stony path in a narrow glen, amidst the mountains of Judea. The mountains that bound this glen are, in general, uncultivated and rocky, but beautifully tufted with underwood. On issuing from this glen, the road carried us over a fatiguing succession of stony hills and valleys; the country, as we approached Jerusalem, becoming more and more desolate, till it terminated in a rugged desert of rock, which scarcely admitted the growth of a few blades of grass. About four o'clock we came in sight of the Holy City: its first appearance, when approached from Jaffa, is that of a neat little walled town, seated on a gentle eminence. Outside the gate was a band of Pilgrims, amusing themselves with throwing stones. We entered the city, and proceeded, through a few narrow and winding streets, to the Latin Convent of San Salvador, where we took up our abode.

I have visited, more than once, the Convents of the Syrians, Copts, and Abyssinians.

The Syrians (who are Nestorians from Mesopotamia) were pleased with the Syriac Testaments, and told me that they would go off rapidly in Diarbekir and other places. I made a present of one of these Testaments to their Church Library, and gave a couple to two of their Priests, who were on the point of returning to Merdin. The number of Syrians in Jerusalem is about fifteen.

The Abyssinians reside in the same Convent with the Copts. Their Chief Priest informed me, that there are, in all, about twenty Abyssinians in Jerusalem. Most of them have been settled here some time: they came hither originally as Pilgrims, and were obliged to remain in Jerusalem for want of means to carry them back to their own country. The Abyssinian Pilgrims are rare. Sometimes years elapse, and not one appears. This year ONE has arrived. He is from Gondar, and knows Mr. Pearce well. During my conversation with the Priest, we sat in an arched excavation in the wall of the Convent: before him lay a number of Church Books and fragments of the Scriptures, in Ethiopic, beautifully written: they had been brought from Abyssinia, and the Priest refused to sell any of them. The

Abyssinians have no Church of their own in Jerusalem; but perform their Service in the Chapels of the Copts or Armenians, with whom they are on friendly terms. They are chiefly supported (as well as the Copts) by the Armenians. As the Abyssinians are in the lowest state of poverty, I put twelve Ethiopic Psalters into the hands of the Priest, desiring him to distribute them gratuitously among his people: this he did immediately, while I was sitting with him: they all manifested their gratitude. Among them were several women who read the Ethiopic fluently. One of them was pointed out to me, by the Priest, as the daughter of the present King of Abyssinia. I afterward went to view their little Library; and found their Books (all Manuscripts, with the exception of two Psalters, printed in London, given to them by Mr. Bureckhardt,) covered with dust, partly on shelves, and partly in a trunk in a ruined chamber. All the Abyssinian Pilgrims have a ready access to these Books, and may take them out to read whenever they please.

The Latin and Greek Easters are now concluded. Their Ceremonies have been very numerous. I shall transcribe from my Journal what I have written on four of them.

Here I must pause, to give you, in a few words, some idea of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is a large building. In the middle, under the great cupola, stands an edifice of considerable size, containing the Tomb; over which are suspended forty-four lamps, always burning. Of these, twenty-one belong to the Greeks, thirteen to the Catholics, six to the Armenians, and four to the Copts. Between the Sepulchre and the sides of the Church is a large space, open and free to all; the Chapels of the different Communions being in the sides of the Church. Mount Calvary is within its walls. You ascend it by a flight of steps, and on its top are two small Chapels belonging to the Greeks. The large Chapel of the Greeks is the most splendid and richly ornamented. For a minute description of the Church, I refer you to Maundrell and Chateaubriand.

On Palm-Sunday (March the 26th) I went to see the Ceremony of the Latins. After a considerable time had been spent in singing before the door of the Sepulchre, the Deputy Superior of the Latin Convent (the Superior himself being in Cyprus) entered the Sepulchre, with some Priests, to bless the Palm Branches that lay there. When this was done, he left the Sepulchre; and, sitting on an elevated chair, received the palms, which had been blessed, from the hands of the Priests. These came forward first, and knelt, one after the other, before the Deputy Superior, receiving from his hand (which they kissed) a branch of the consecrated palm. When this part of the ceremony was concluded, the crowd pressed forward to receive THEIR palms. The confusion and tumult were excessive. The Turks,\* with their sticks and whips, did all they could to restrain the impetuosity of the people; and had it not been for their great activity, the Deputy Superior would certainly have been overwhelmed by the crowd. When the palms had been distributed, and the confusion had, in some measure, subsided, the Priests and some others walked three times in procession round the Sepulchre, with lighted candles, incense, elevated crucifixes, and palms. They sang as they walked. When the procession was ended, an altar, splendidly ornamented, was placed before the door of the Sepulchre, and Mass was performed.

On Good-Friday there was a grand Procession and Ceremony of the Latins, in the evening. It commenced with an Italian Sermon, in the Catholic Chapel, on the flagellation of Christ.<sup>t</sup>

\* There are always in the Church, during the Ceremonies, a considerable number of Turks, with sticks and whips, to keep the people in order. This appeared to me, at first, a rather tyrannical measure; but repeated visits to the Church soon convinced me, that, without the interposition of the Turks, it would become the theatre of riot and disorder. These Turks (who are paid by the Convents) guard the Processions, and clear the way for them.

<sup>t</sup> In their Chapel, the Catholics profess to show the Pillar where this took place.

From this place they proceeded to the Chapel where, they say, Christ's garments were taken from him: here was another Sermon in Italian. They then ascended Mount Calvary; and passed first into the Chapel which marks the spot where Christ was nailed to the Cross: the large crucifix and image which they carried in the procession was here laid on the ground, and a Spanish Sermon was pronounced over it. When this was finished, the crucifix was raised, and moved into the adjoining Chapel of the Elevation of the Cross: here it was fixed upright behind the altar: a Monk standing by, preached for twenty minutes, on the Crucifixion. The Sermon was in Italian; and when it was concluded, two Monks approached the Cross, and, partially enveloping the body of the image in linen, took off, with a pair of pincers, the Crown of Thorns from the head, kissed it, and laid it on a plate: the nails were then drawn out from the hands and feet, with the same ceremony. The arms of the image were so contrived, that, on the removal of the nails which kept them extended, they dropped upon the sides of the body. The image was then laid on linen, and borne down from Calvary to the Stone of Unction, the spot where they say Christ's body was anointed: here the image was extended; and was perfumed with spices, fragrant water, and clouds of incense: the Monks knelt round the stone, with large lighted candles in their hands: a Monk ascended an adjoining pulpit, and preached a Sermon in Arabic. The procession then went forward to the Sepulchre, where the image was deposited, and a Sermon preached in Spanish. This concluded the Ceremony.

On the Easter-day of the Latins, which is the Palm-Sunday of the Greeks, Armenians, &c. I went to the Church early, and found it excessively crowded. Most of the people had remained there all night. The Catholic, Greek, and Armenian Processions were long and splendid. In all the processions to-day, except that of the Catholics, Palm Branches were carried, and also Banners with the vari-

ous scenes of the Passion painted on them. The people were very eager to sanctify their Palms, by touching the Banners with them, as they passed.

On the Greek Good-Friday, I went to the Church, with the intention of spending the night there with the Pilgrims, and of viewing the Ceremonies. The Turkish Guard at the gate was particularly strong; and they admitted none who did not choose to pay twenty-five piastres, (about 16s. 8d.) The Firman which I obtained at Acre from the Pacha, who is Guardian of the Holy Sepulchre, saved myself and servant this expense. It is a general belief among the Greeks and Armenians, that, on Easter-Eve, a Fire descends from heaven into the Sepulchre. The eagerness of the Greeks, Armenians, and others, to light their candles at this Holy Fire, carried an immense crowd to the Church, notwithstanding the sum which they were obliged to pay. About nine at night, I retired to rest, in a small apartment in the Church. A little before midnight, the servant roused me to see the Greek Procession. I hastened to the gallery of the Church. The scene was striking and brilliant. The Greek Chapel was splendidly illuminated. Five rows of lamps were suspended in the dome; and almost every individual of the immense multitude held a lighted candle in his hand. The Procession and subsequent Service around the Sepulchre were long and splendid.

I was awakened early in the following morning by the noise in the Church; and on proceeding to my station in the gallery, I found the crowd below in a state of great confusion. Some were employed in carrying others, on their backs, round the Sepulchre; others in dancing and clapping their hands, exclaiming in Arabic—"This is the Tomb of our Lord!" Sometimes a man passed, standing upright on the shoulders of another; and I saw, more than once, four carried along in this manner, a little boy, seated, forming the fourth, or topmost: others again were busy in chasing one another round the Tomb, and shouting like madmen.

Whenever they saw in the crowd a man who they thought could pay them, they seized and forcibly carried him, in their arms, two or three times round the Church. The whole was a most lamentable profanation of the place! The same happens every year. The noise and confusion increased, as the moment appointed for the apparition of the Fire approached. At length, the Turks, who had not hitherto interfered, began to brandish their whips, and to still, in some measure, the tumult. About noon, the Governor of Jerusalem, with a part of his guard, entered the gallery. The eagerness and anxiety of the people were now excessive. They all pressed toward the Sepulchre, each person holding a bundle of tapers in his hand. The Chief Agent of the Greek Patriarch, and an Armenian Bishop, had entered the Sepulchre shortly before. All eyes were fixed on the gallery, watching for the Governor's signal. He made it, and the Fire appeared through one of the holes in the building that covers the Tomb! A man lighted his taper at the hallowed flame; and then pushed into the thickest of the crowd, and endeavoured to fight his way through. The tumult and clamour was great; and the man was nearly crushed to death, by the eagerness of the people to light their tapers at his flame. In about twenty minutes every one, both in the galleries and below, men, women, and children, had their candles lighted. Many of them put their lighted candles to their faces, imagining that the flame would not scorch them: I perceived, however, by their grimaces, that they speedily discovered their mistake. They did not permit these tapers to burn long: reserving them for occasions of need. The power which they attribute to those candles that have been touched with the fire from heaven, is almost unbounded: they suppose, for instance, that if, overtaken by a storm at sea, they throw one of these candles into the waves, the tempest will immediately subside. They are chiefly valued, however, in consequence of the superstitious notion, that, if they are burned at the funeral of the individual, they

will most assuredly save his soul from future punishment. To obtain these candles, and to undergo a second baptism in the waters of the Jordan, are the chief objects of the visit of the Greek Pilgrims to Jerusalem.

What I have written will suffice to show you what takes place annually round the Tomb of Christ. May we not hope that the exertions of the Bible Society in the diffusion of the Scriptures, which the Pilgrims will be enabled, in future, to purchase at the very gates of the Sepulchre, and carry home to their families and friends, will tend progressively to inspire a purer and more exalted spirit of devotion?

The average number of Greek Pilgrims is about 2000. This year they are only 1600. Of these Pilgrims, the majority are Native Greeks, who speak and read Romaic. The next in number are the Greeks from Asia Minor, who speak and read the Turkish, but in the Romaic character. The third class consists of Russians; and the fourth and fifth of Wallachians and Bulgarians. Few, however, of these Pilgrims can read.

The Armenian Pilgrims amount this year to about 1300. The majority of them are from Anatolia, and speak nothing but Turkish. Very few of them can read.

I found, at the Armenian Convent, a Pilgrim from Calcutta. He speaks English with considerable fluency, and is a member of the Calcutta Bible Society. I found in his room some English Religious Tracts, printed at Serampore, which had been given him by Dr. Carey. He took twenty-three Armenian Testaments from me, to distribute in Jerusalem. He tells me, that an Archbishop, a Bishop, and a Priest, have lately gone from Echmiatzin to Calcutta, to study there, in order that, on their return, after three years, they may be able to open an Academy in Echmiatzin.

The average number of Copt Pilgrims is about 200. This year only 150 arrived. Their appearance is very wretched.

The Pilgrims that have visited Jerusalem, this year, may be thus summed up:—

Greeks,	1600
Armenians,	1300
Copts,	150
Catholics,	50
	chiefly from
	Damascus.
Abyssinians,	1
Syrians,	30
<hr/>	
Total,	3131

I have been with the Pilgrims to the River Jordan. We left Jerusalem about seven in the morning, accompanied by Messrs. Grey and Hyde, two English Travellers.

A great portion of the Pilgrims had preceded us. The streets of Jerusalem were all life and bustle. To avoid the confusion, we left the City by the Gate of Bethlehem; and, passing along the north side, fell in with the Train of Pilgrims at the Gate of St. Stephen. The scene was very lively. The path through which we passed, down Mount Moriah, across the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and up the side of Olivet, was lined with people, who came to witness the Procession. A Turkish Band of Music, leaving the Gate of St. Stephen, and accompanied with banners, proceeded with us as far as a tree on Olivet, under which the Governor of Jerusalem, with his Court, was seated. Guns were fired at intervals.

In about three quarters of an hour after we had started, we passed through Bethany, a little miserable village. Shortly after, we descended into a deep valley. The appearance of the Pilgrims, with the immense train of camels, horses, mules, &c. was here truly picturesque. The Pilgrims, Muleteers, and Guards, formed a body of about 2300 persons. The country through which we passed was barren and desolate beyond description.

At length, after having crossed a number of hills, we descended into the Plain of Jericho. In the midst of this Plain appears a large verdant tract, like an Oasis in the Desert; and here, embosomed in trees, stands the wretched mud-built village of Jericho. About half past twelve we arrived on the edge of the Oasis, and encamped. A large extent of ground was covered with the tents. An able artist might

have made a very interesting picture of the scene. He would have introduced the numerous and variously-coloured tents—the diversified costumes of the Pilgrims—the Turkish Horse-soldiers, with their elegant dress and long spears, galloping across the Plain—with camels and horses reposing. We spent the remainder of the day here. About half past three the next morning we all set out, by torch-light, for the Jordan. The appearance of the Pilgrims, moving in numerous detached parties, with their flambeaux, across the Plain, was singular and striking.

The sun rose shortly before we arrived at the brink of the river. There, men, women, and children stripped, and plunged into the water. Many employed themselves, while in the river, in washing, and thus sanctifying, the linen which they destined for their grave-clothes.

The Jordan, at the spot where the Pilgrims bathed, is beautifully picturesque. Its breadth may be about twenty yards; and is shaded, on both sides, by the thick foliage of closely-planted trees. The water appeared turbid, and was not deep.

Some Turkish Horsemen dashed through the River, and rode to and fro, in the Grove on the opposite side, to protect the Pilgrims from the guns of the Bedouins, many of whom were assembled to watch the Ceremony.

On retiring from the water, the Pilgrims employed themselves in cutting branches from the trees, to carry home with them, as memorials of the Jordan. They then mounted their beasts, and returned to their former station in the Plain.

Our party set off from the Jordan, with Prince Avaloff (a Georgian) and his suite, to the Dead Sea, where we arrived in about two hours and a half. We rambled about, for some time, on the borders of this Lake, which covers the ashes of Sodom and Gomorrah. I tasted the water, and found it excessively nauseous. Some of the party bathed.

On our return, we traversed the fertile part of the Plain—passed through the village of Jericho—and

returned to our tents about noon. Most of the Pilgrims had already started for Jerusalem. After taking a slight refreshment, we returned to the City by the same way that we had come, and entered by the Gate of St. Stephen.

Jerusalem is a considerable place. The most beautiful building within its wall is the Mosque of Omar, which stands on the site of Solomon's Temple. The Turks have a singular reverence for this Mosque: and will not permit a Christian even to set his foot in the large grassy area which surrounds it.

The walks which I most frequent are those that lead down the Valley of Jehoshaphat, by the fountains of Siloah; or those that run along the side of Olivet. From the side of Olivet you have a very commanding view of Jerusalem. The Mosque of Omar appears particularly fine from this situation. The greater part of the surrounding country is most desolate and dreary. Hills of white parched rock, dotted, here and there, with patches of cultivated land, every where meet and offend the eye.

In the north of Palestine are many beautiful and fertile spots; but not so in Judea. The breath of Jehovah's wrath seems, in a peculiar manner, to have blasted and withered the territory of the Daughter of Zion! What a change has been wrought in the land, once flowing with *milk and honey!*

Often as I have contemplated Jerusalem, have the words of the Prophet escaped my lips—when I have felt the strains of Jeremiah to be beautifully pathetic and true, when recalled to mind on the spot that prompted his sacred “Lamentations!”—*How doth the City sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become a widow! She, that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!*—*How hath the Lord covered the Daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger!*

I have spent a day or two in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood. Under the Latin Convent at Bethlehem, they show three altars; said to mark the spot where Christ was born, where the manger stood, and where the Magi adored. These altars are splendidly adorned, and illuminated with many lamps.

The men of Bethlehem have peculiar privileges. They alone, of all Christians subject to the Turks, are permitted to wear the White Turban, and to carry arms. They are fine men, and have an air of boldness and independence, not commonly met with in the Christians of these countries. Their government is a kind of Democracy; and their Chiefs are elected from among themselves. The Bethlehemites are perpetually at war with the Turks of Hebron.

It was my intention to go direct from Jerusalem to Damascus, by way of Napolose and Tiberias; but the disturbed state of the country about Napolose, occasioned by the presence of the Pacha of Damascus, who was making his rounds to collect the tribute,\* caused me reluctantly to alter my plans, and thus to resign the hopes which I had indulged, of gleaning some further particulars respecting the Samaritans.

On the 19th of April I left Jerusalem, and proceeded to Rama; and from thence, across the luxuriant Plain of Sharon, and by Cæsarea and the foot of Carmel, to Acre. After a few

\* A few days before my departure from Jerusalem, the Pacha arrived there from Napolose; and, according to custom, pitched his tent outside the walls. A large body of troops accompanies him. One of his soldiers, a Christian Albanese, impelled by curiosity, had the imprudence to set his foot within the walls of the Mosque of the Temple. He was discovered—a tumult was raised—and the Pacha was informed of the soldier's crime. He immediately despatched one of his slaves, with orders to put the soldier to death, wherever he should find him. A few hours after, I saw the body of the poor fellow lying in the street, naked and mangled, and exposed to the insults of the Turks. His head was nearly severed from his body, and one of his hands had been cut through with a sabre.

days repose in Acre, I rode forward, by way of Sour, to Saide.

From Saide I proceeded to Der el Kamr, the Metropolis of the Druses, on Mount Lebanon. Mr Bertrand had given me a letter to his Brother, Physician to the Emir Bechir; and this Gentleman introduced me to the Prince. I sat some time with him, and conversed on various subjects, Mr. Bertrand acting as interpreter. The Prince made many inquiries about England; and respecting his friend Sir Sydney Smith, who formerly saved him from the vengeance of Djezzar, Pacha of Acre. Since that period, the Prince has always manifested an affectionate attachment to the English. He ordered an apartment to be prepared for me in the Palace at Der el Kamr.

The Prince rarely visits his metropolis. He resides at his Palace of Bledyn, about half an hour's ride from the town. The occasion of his being at this time in Der el Kamr, was to receive the pelisse, which is annually sent to him from Constantinople, as a renewed Investiture of his Office of Emir.

The number of the Druses may be about 70,000. Of these 20,000 men are capable of bearing arms.

The Druses are divided into two grand classes—that of the "Akkals," or *intelligent*; and that of the "Djahels," or *ignorant*.

The Akkals, in number about 10,000, form the Sacred Order; and are distinguishable by their white turbans, the emblem of purity. Every Thursday evening, the Akkals assemble together in their Oratories, and perform their religious rites. What these rites are, no one but themselves knows: their ceremonies are enveloped in the profoundest mystery: during the performance of them, they place guards around the spot, to prevent the approach of the profane: their wives are permitted to be present: if any of the uninitiated dared to witness any part of their sacred rites, instant death would, on discovery, be the reward of their temerity. All the Akkals are permitted to marry. The Chief of the Order resides in a

village called El Mutna. The title and privileges of the members are not necessarily handed down from father to son. When arrived at a certain age, every individual, who wishes it, and whose conduct has not been stained with any flagrant vice, may, after passing through some initiatory ceremonies, enter the Order. At the funeral of an Akkal, the principal of the Priests who happen to be present, demands of the bye-standers their testimony of the conduct of the deceased during his life; if their testimony be favourable, he addresses the deceased with the words—"God be merciful to thee!" if otherwise, the address is omitted. The funerals of the Akkals, as well as those of the other Druses, are always very numerously attended. The Akkals bear arms only in defence of their country, and never accompany an invading army.

The Djahels, who form by far the most numerous class, perform no religious rites whatever, unless when circumstances oblige them to assume the appearance of Mahomedans. On these occasions, they enter the Mosques, and recite their prayers with the Turks. They consider both Jesus Christ and Mahomet as imposters; and cherish an equal dislike to Christians and Turks. They believe that the Deity was incarnated in the person of Hakem, Caliph of Egypt; and that he will shortly appear again. He is to come, they think, from China; and to meet, fight with, and utterly destroy, all his enemies, at a place called the "Black Stone."

The Druses regard the Chinese as belonging to their sect, and as the most exemplary members of it in the world.

They believe in the transmigration of souls; and that, according to the character of the individual, in his first journey through life, will be the nature of the body which his soul will animate in a future state of existence: if his conduct has been fair and honourable, his soul, at his death, will pass into and vivify the body of him who is destined to fill a respectable station in life: if, on the other hand, his conduct has been evil, his soul will

enter the body of a horse, a mule, an ass, &c. Those who distinguish themselves by noble and meritorious actions, and shine by their virtues in their career through life, will, as the highest recompence of their merits, pass, after death, into the bodies of Chinese Druses.

I inquired of Mr. Bertrand, if it was true that the Druses worshipped a calf; he said that he had questioned many of them about it, and they all denied it: "Do you suppose," they asked, "that we would worship, as our God, the image of an animal, whose flesh we eat, and of whose skin we make our shoes?"

Schools are pretty frequent. The Akkals are generally the masters; and are paid by their pupils. They teach reading and writing. The book generally used as an exercise for the children, is the Koran. In some villages, where the only Schools are those of the Christians, the Druses send their children thither, where they are taught to read the Psalms of David.

I had been told that there was a great number of Christians among the Druses: this, however, I find is not the case. The Emir Bechir, with his family, and some of the other nobles of the nation, have received Baptism, have their children baptized, have Chapels in their houses, and hear Mass every Sunday. The rest of the natives are hostile to the Christians.

The Emir has retained his situation for upward of thirty years. He wears the Green Robe of a Sherif, or one of the descendants of Mahomet; and has the exterior of a Turk. He never enters a Mosque, but has a Chapel in his Palace at Btedyn, where service is regularly performed by a Maronite Priest. In conformity with his Christian principles, he has only one wife, by whom he has several children living.

From Der el Kamr I proceeded along the Mountains, through a succession of beautiful and romantic scenes, to Beirut.

I then set out for the Convent of Patriarch (late Archbishop) Giarve. His Convent is universally called in the country, Der el Sharfi. After

passing for some hours along a rugged, steep, and difficult path, among the mountains, we arrived, about three in the afternoon, at the foot of an eminence; on the side of which, and near to its wooded summit, stands the Convent of Santa Maria della Liberatrice. The situation of the Convent is noble and commanding, overlooking a large tract of mountain scenery, the town of Beirut, a long line of coast, and a wide sweep of the Mediterranean. The Convent itself is not yet completed. Its Chapel is small, and is hung round with a great number of little pictures of Saints and Scripture scenes. It was pleasing to hear, in the evening, the sound of the various Convent Bells in the neighbouring mountains, which summon the people to Vespers.

Here I left my mules and servant, and proceeded forward alone and on foot. The Patriarch received me in the kindest manner, and I remained with him till the following morning. I found him rather indisposed, in consequence of a recent fall from his horse.

The Archbishop was elevated to the Patriarchal Seat about a month before my visit.

In reply to inquiries respecting the Maronites, by whom he is surrounded, the Patriarch told me that they would gladly receive the Arabic Scriptures, in an Edition that would stand the test of a rigid examination. They may amount to 80,000 souls. Reading is a very general attainment among them, and almost every village has its School. In their Schools, as in those of the other Christians in Syria, nothing is taught but reading, writing, and the Catechism. The Psalter, and some Theological Dissertations, are the only books used in their Schools.

Finding that a prolonged stay in the Patriarch's Convent would, under present circumstances, be fruitless—himself being indisposed, his press not come, and his Convent undergoing repairs—I took my leave on the morning of the 4th of May, and proceeded to the Convent of Mar-Hanna Sonère, where the Arabic printing press is. The Monks of this Convent, who are

Greek Catholics, received me very kindly. I purchased several of their books, and then went to see their Printing Apparatus. They have only one Press; consequently the work proceeds but slowly. On the numerous Saints'-Days of their Calendar they do not work; so that the average number of Volumes which they may issue in the course of a year, may amount, they said, to about 180. Of these, the greater part are Psalters. Seven persons are employed at the Press. The books are bound in the Convent, which contains 35 individuals: of these 8 only are Monks, the remainder being Laics and Servants. All the profits resulting from the Printing Establishment go to the Patriarch of the Greek Catholics, who resides at Zouk: and he employs the money in the service of his flock.

I proceeded from Mar-Hanna direct to Damascus; and, after having descended Lebanon, crossed the fine Valley of Bekaa, and traversed the dreary solitudes of Anti-Lebanon, arrived in that city about two in the afternoon of May the 8th.

The Greeks under the Patriarch of Antioch may amount to 20,000; and, of these, about 4,000 are in Damascus. The rest of the Christian population of Damascus consists of Catholics, Latins, Maronites, Greeks, &c. 16,000, Armenians 150, Nestorians 70. This is a rough calculation. It is impossible to know the exact number.

The Jews of Damascus may amount to 2,500. The Jews throughout the Pachalics of Damascus and Acre possess more liberty than in most parts of Turkey. The Prime Ministers of the two Pachas are Jews and brothers; and, by their power and influence, which are great, shield their nation, to a considerable degree, from oppression and violence.

After a stay of ten days in Damascus, I began to move toward Tripoli. The war in Balbec obliged us to follow the great caravan road. After a dreary ride of five days along the edge of the Desert, we arrived at Homs, on the Orontes. Turning thence to the west, we arrived, in three days more, at Tripoli.

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In order to avoid a hot and fatiguing ride of four days along the shore, I hired a small vessel at Tripoli, which carried me up to Latichea in 32 hours. Here I finished my business with our Consul, Signor Elias, a Greek; and then set out for Aleppo, where I arrived in six days.

The Christian population of Aleppo may be thus enumerated:—Greek Catholics 14,000, Maronites 2,000, Syrian Catholics 5,000, Nestorians 100, Armenian Catholics 8,000, Armenian Schismatics (as they are called) 2,000, Greeks under the Patriarch of Antioch 500.

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*Abstract of the Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the Diocese of North-Carolina, held in St. Paul's Church, Edenton, on Saturday, April 29th, and Monday, May 1st, A. D. 1820.*

THE Convention was composed of the Right Rev. Bishop Moore, of Virginia, having also charge, under the 20th Canon of the General Convention, of North-Carolina, 5 Presbyters, (one of whom \* was ordained during the session), 2 Deacons, (also ordained during the session),† and Lay Delegates from 4 parishes.

The Convention was opened by Morning Prayer, by the Rev. Richard S. Mason, Deacon, Minister of Christ Church, Newbern, and an appropriate Sermon by the Rev. Gregory T. Bedell, Rector of St. John's Church, Fayetteville.

The Rev. Gregory T. Bedell was elected Secretary.

The Parochial Reports made to the Bishop, and entered on the Journal, agreeably to the 45th Canon of the General Convention, furnish the following aggregate:—

Baptisms, Adults 8, Infants 42, not specified 69, total 119—Marriages 26—Burials 26—Communicants 326.

Duncan Cameron, Esq. was duly elected a Lay Delegate from this diocese to the General Convention.

The following gentlemen were elected the standing committee for the ensuing year:—

\* See page 351. † See page 351.

The Rev. Adam Empie, the Rev. Gregory T. Bedell, and John Winslow, John A. Cameron, and Robert Strange, Esqrs.

The following reports were made to the Convention:—

The committee on the state of the Church, having, according to order, had the several matters referred to them under consideration, beg leave to

*REPORT,*

That in reviewing the state of the Church within this diocese, since the last annual Convention, they find much cause of thankfulness to the great Head of the Church, for its increased prosperity. The parochial reports, presented in conformity to the canon on that subject, show that in our Church there is an increase of members. Many have been added to the number of those who profess to be the followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and there is good reason to believe, that in a short time, the number will be considerably enlarged.

The increasing prosperity of the Church will naturally confirm the hopes, and quicken the exertions of her friends in every part of the state. The favour and assistance of our venerable and zealous Bishop, who has kindly extended his paternal care over our Church, has conferred lasting benefits on her interests; and while the attachment of the friends to her doctrines and discipline, has been established and confirmed, Christians of other denominations have, in a spirit of candour and liberality, admired and approved the purity and excellence of her institutions.

It appears from the report of the Managers of the Missionary Society made to the committee, that there is a disposable fund at present of about \$1,000. The managers were not able to employ any regular Missionary during the last year, notwithstanding their constant endeavours. Much missionary labour was gratuitously performed by the Rev. Mr. Bedell, and the Rev. Mr. Mason; by the former in St. Mary's, Orange county, and other places; and by the latter in several places in the western part of the state,

and especially in Lincoln county, where there are many members of our Church, whose attachment to her doctrines, discipline, and worship, has not been shaken, though deprived for many years of the ministration of her ordinances.

There is great reason to believe, that in many parts of the state, congregations can and will be formed, in case a Missionary can be sent among them, and the board of managers pledge themselves, that no effort on their part shall be wanting to procure and send forth labourers into their Master's vineyard. The managers, in their report to the committee, state, that they have engaged the Rev. Mr. Wright as a Missionary. The Rev. Mr. Hooper will occasionally perform Missionary duties, as far as may be consistent with his duties as a Professor in the University of the state. The Rev. Mr. Toland, is also expected soon to enter into the service of the society.

The society will continue their appeals to the liberality of the friends of the Church and of religion, to aid them with the means of having the Gospel preached, that the glad tidings of salvation may visit the humblest cottages in the state.

The committee have bestowed on the resolution and the proposed alteration of the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church, submitted by the Hon. Charles F. Mercer, to the last, and to be acted on at the next General Convention, that consideration which its importance demands. The second article of the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church secures to the Church in each state an equal representation in the General Convention. The proposed alteration, if adopted, would destroy that equality so essentially necessary to harmony in its proceedings, and give to the representatives of a few dioceses the entire control of the affairs of the Church. The committee, therefore, recommend, that the representatives of this Convention in the ensuing General Convention, be requested and instructed to oppose the adoption of the said resolution and proposed alterations.

On revising the Canons of the Church, the Committee are satisfied that they do not at present require alteration or addition.

Respectfully submitted,  
**DUNCAN CAMERON,**  
*Chairman.*

The standing committee, in offering their report to the Convention, have to remark, that nothing of any great consequence has come before them during the last year. Upon the requisite testimonials being laid before them, they have recommended to the Bishop, Mr. William Hooper and Mr. Thomas Wright, to be admitted into the holy order of Deacons, and the Rev. Richard S. Mason, to that of the Priesthood.

They have admitted as candidates for orders, Mr. William Lowry, residing in Wilmington, Mr. J. Davis, in Orange county, and Mr. Burton H. Hickox, formerly a candidate for orders in the diocese of Connecticut.

Submitted,  
**GREGORY T. BEDELL,**  
*Secretary.*

On motion of Duncan Cameron, Esq. it was *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Rev. Gregory T. Bedell, for his excellent and appropriate sermon at the opening of this session; and that he be requested to furnish a copy to be published with the Journals of the Convention.

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Convention be presented to the Rev. Adam Empie, for the Sermon preached by him on Sunday, the 30th April, at the ordination of Mr. William Hooper and Mr. Thomas Wright, to the order of Deacons; and the Rev. Richard S. Mason to that of the Priesthood; and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof, to be published with the Journals.

On motion of the Rev. Richard S. Mason, it was *Resolved*, That the standing committee be requested to take into consideration the propriety of organizing a Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, by printing and publishing such works as the society, by its officers, may think

conducive to this effect, and that the standing committee, in case they approve of the organizing of this society, be requested also to draw up a constitution and laws of the same; their report on the subject to be presented to the next Convention.

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the members of the Church at Edenton, for the hospitable reception they have afforded to the Clerical and Lay Delegates of this body, during the session; and to the inhabitants of the town in general, for their attention to the sacred duties in which the Clergy have been engaged.

*Resolved*, That the 2d article of the Constitution, which provides for the meeting of the Convention on the 2d Thursday after Easter, be suspended for the ensuing year.

*Resolved*, That the next Convention be held on the first Saturday after Easter-Day, A. D. 1821, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon, and that the Secretary give to each Clerical member, and to the Vestry of each Church, at least six weeks notice in writing.

On motion of John A. Cameron, Esq. *Resolved*, That the next Convention be held in the city of Raleigh.

*Resolved*, That during the session of the next Convention, a Sermon be preached to aid the funds of the Missionary Society, and that the Bishop appoint the preacher.

After the minutes of the proceedings of both days of the session had been read, and the business of the Convention declared concluded, the following address was delivered by the Bishop:—

BRETHREN,

The success which hath marked our efforts in the behalf of the Church of our fathers, the increase of the number of our Clergy, and the general disposition discovered by the members of our Society, to aid us in the work in which we are engaged, should inspire our minds with confidence, and excite us to the most animated and unwearied exertion. The set time in which God will have mercy upon Zion, appears to have arrived. The

night has, indeed, been long ; the tempest in which the Church has been involved, has been truly terrible, but the sun has risen upon us, and dissipated our darkness. The clouds of desolation and ruin are dispelled from the heavens, and the voice of joy and gladness is again heard in our temples. The Almighty God hath promised that those who honour him he will honour. To secure his favour and approbation, let us, my Clerical Brethren, make his precepts the rule of our life, and be determined, with his assistance, to know nothing but Jesus, and him crucified. Leaning upon his almighty arm, countenanced in our ministerial labours by a respectable laity, we have every thing to hope and to expect. Under God, our dependence is upon them ; and I have no doubt, that provided they see us engaged in the duties of our office, diligently labouring to promote the good of the Church, and the welfare of immortal souls, they will withhold from us no comfort which is in their power to bestow. Their anxiety to advance the interests of our communion must be equal to that which swells our bosoms. When they unite with us in the services of the sanctuary, they unite in those very services in which their departed parents united ; when they kneel round our altars, they kneel at the same footstool, they occupy the same place their fathers occupied before them ; when they assist us in bearing the ark of the living God upon their shoulders, they know and feel that it is the same ark which their parents sustained. Their devotion is excited by the pleasing recollection, and their attachment and exertion infallibly secured. Preach ye then the Gospel, humble the sinner, exalt the Saviour, and lead your fellow-mortals to the cross of Christ as the only place of safety. "Be steadfast," then, I beseech you, "immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour will not be in vain in the Lord."

*My Brethren of the Laity*—The inducements which prompted you to the first commencement of the work in which you have so generously en-

gaged, must certainly be increased by that prosperity and success which have attended your efforts. The number of your Clergy at the first Convention you held, was only three ; they have now increased to more than twice that number ; and by the continuance of the same vigorous conduct which has marked your conduct hitherto, you may expect, in a few years, to see your vacant Churches filled with pious, faithful men.

You must be sensible of your importance from the consideration, that however zealous the Clergy may be, they cannot live without your aid. God, in his good Providence, has blessed you with a large share of temporal things, and I have no doubt that you feel disposed of your abundance to contribute to the advancement of his cause. You have already done much, and it is a tribute justly due you to say, and I say it, my beloved, with pleasure, that I believe you are still disposed to continue your liberality. May Jehovah, in mercy, lift up the light of his countenance upon you—may you live the life of the righteous, and may their last end be yours—Peace be with you all.

After a Prayer by the Bishop, and the Apostolic Benediction, the Convention was declared adjourned.

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FOR THE CHRISTIAN JOURNAL.

*Holy-Day Suggestions.*

—“How many drink the cup  
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread  
Of misery. Sore pierced by wintry winds,  
How many shrink into the sordid hut  
Of cheerless poverty.”

THE season is again approaching when the heart expands with more than common joyousness, and all the affections go forth, as if to seek relief from their accustomed selfishness in communicating and receiving pleasure.

At such a moment, it would seem as if no appeal were necessary to awaken the sympathy of generous minds, and direct their attention towards the miserable and the comfortless. But we are so apt to suppose all others happy when we ourselves are so ; and there is something in prosperity so calculated to inspire forget-

fulness of misfortune, that we want to be constantly reminded of that most pressing, yet most grateful, duty of ministering to the necessities of the unhappy.

For myself, unaccustomed to riot with the gay, and happily removed from the lowly scenes of poverty, and occupying that middle point of observation, where the follies of the former, and the distresses of the latter, are equally open to view—when I see profuseness lavished on gaudy decoration, or in ostentatious display, or on the thoughtless, heartless assemblages of dissipation, without affording pleasure or inspiring esteem, I cannot help suggesting the nobler satisfaction that might be found in drying the tear-brimmed eye, or raising the drooping spirits of some humble child of affliction.

Upon those who, excusing themselves from the charge of extravagance, delight in accumulating useless stores of wealth, and upon all others who are strangers to want, I would earnestly press the consideration of their own comforts on the one hand, and, on the other, of the destitution by which thousands around them, once possessed of similar comforts, are now disheartened and overwhelmed.

Such a comparison, while it lifts the heart with gratitude to the benevolent Parent of all good, will not exalt it with pride. On the contrary, a feeling of unworthiness and humility will scarcely fail to be excited, when we see exertions, as arduous as our own, which have failed of success; schemes as well planned, which have proved abortive; merits, perhaps, surpassing ours, depressed and hidden; fortunes superior, dissipated and lost.

In the pursuit or in the enjoyment of worldly advantages, those we possess are seldom fairly appreciated. We think we are not rich, because we have not arrived at the point at which we aim. In the midst of competency, therefore—perhaps of abundance, we feel poor—we give ourselves up to toil and anxiety—we murmur at our want of perfect success:—we are unthankful and unhappy.

An acquaintance with the details of real poverty, dispels this delusion. It is wise, therefore, to seek such an intimacy, that we may know our relative advantages; and discovering how very different from the evils of actual penury, is the comfort we enjoy, we shall feel an ability to relieve, of which we were before ignorant, and causes of thankfulness, of which we had not even dreamed.

So far from making ourselves poorer by the exercise of a generous philanthropy, we shall return to our own enjoyments with increased sensibility to their value, and will gratefully acknowledge, that true contentment is at once the fruit and the reward of benevolence.

At this season particularly, which calls forth our best feelings at the same time that it offers so many objects for their exercise, the love of Christ should cause our bounty to flow without restraint. Let every one, before he seeks his own gratification, look round among those who have claims upon his kindness, and as far as he is able, satisfy those claims.

If some unfortunate father, too tender of the feelings of his family to proclaim their wants, and too deeply sensible of their sufferings to conceal them, has whispered the story of his domestic privations, and you, in a moment of unfeeling apathy, have pleaded a fancied inability, while he has left you not only unrelieved, but wounded by the fruitless disclosure of his necessities, and by the cruelty which repulsed him: now seek him out—and with delicate, and, if possible, with unseen hand, atone for your thoughtless inhumanity.

If you know of sorrows which shun the eye of observation, and in the silence and secrecy of

“deep retired distress,” undermine the genial current which more and more faintly throbs in some gentle bosom—Oh! think not of gaiety—indulge not in pleasure, until those sorrows are relieved, and that gentle bosom be taught to beat with unexpected joy.

You will thus enjoy your cheerful hour of friendship and temperate fe-

tivity with more exquisite delight. If the thought of human woes should then occur to mar your joy, and pictures of distress should rise to dampen your pleasure, these will quickly be banished by the recollection, that by your care these woes have been alleviated, and that distress converted into lightness of heart.

## LAICUS.

*Observations on the Principal Days in December, 1820.*

SUNDAY, the 3d.

*Advent-Sunday.*

THIS day the Church commences the holy season, which she consecrates as preparatory to the great festival in memory of the nativity of Christ. It has its name from a Latin verb signifying *to come to*. This name is peculiarly appropriate, in consideration of the connexion of the season with the *coming of Christ*.

Advent should be rendered a season of preparation for the Festival of the Nativity, by suggesting reflections on the necessity which existed for the mysterious coming of Christ in the flesh.

This appears in the depravity and guilt of our nature, which rendered necessary an atonement, in order that mercy might be extended to us, consistently with the holiness and justice of an infinitely perfect Being, whose attributes cannot be supposed to interfere with each other. It is inconsistent with justice that crimes should go unpunished. It is inconsistent with veracity that threatened punishment should not be inflicted. When we take the Scripture view of the respective characters of God and man, or engage in those reflections on the Divine nature which present themselves to an enlightened mind as most reasonable, and in those on our own character, which experience and observation declare to be most just, we will see a sufficient account of that sense of the need of atonement for human transgressions, which has obtained among men, universally, with regard both to time and place. It is impossible to suppose that an all-per-

fect Being can, consistently with his attributes, admit to approbation and favour, creatures so corrupt as history, observation, and experience, declare man to be, without a satisfaction to his offended justice, sufficient to save his holiness from the reproach of not hating iniquity. Reading, as we do, in the word of God, an awful threat denounced against sin, it is impossible to reconcile, with infinite perfection, the idea of that threat being left unaccomplished. When we take a fair view of the human character and human conduct, as compared with what we must reasonably suppose to be, and what Scripture declares to be, the will of a pure and holy God, we will see an extent of depravity and guilt which must produce, in a reasonable mind, a most appalling sense of the magnitude of the atonement that must be made, before man can possibly expect the favour of God.

By such reflections we are led to receive, as most consistent with reason, the Scripture account of atonement, and to welcome, as bringing the religion best suited to the nature of man, him whose birth we are about to celebrate, as the great Mediator of the covenant which is founded on due satisfaction to the demands of infinite holiness against sin, and which, thus, extends to sinners the free offer of grace and salvation.

But let not these reflections be merely speculative. If we would that they should minister to our preparation duly to celebrate the birth-day of our Lord, they should deeply engage our hearts, and lead to a contrite sense of a personal interest in the great truths on which they dwell. To see, in their full value, the character and offices of Christ, we must feel that we need him as our Saviour, and that we have no hope, but through him; bowed down under the grievous remembrance and intolerable burden of our sins, and trembling under a sense of the awful danger to which they expose us, we must look to Jesus as him from whom only cometh our help, by whom alone we can be relieved, and cherish even the faintest hope of mercy. We will then see

the inestimable value of a Redeemer, and the unsearchable riches of atoning mercy; with liveliest emotions of faith, of gratitude, and love, we will listen to the pious call of the Church, and strive, through grace, to be prepared duly to celebrate the great festival which is sacred to the memory of the birth of him who comes to save us from the guilt, the dominion, and the everlasting consequences of our sins, and to raise us here to the *hope*, and hereafter to the eternal *fruition*; of the inheritance of saints in light.

To confer this inheritance on his faithful servants, and to denounce his just indignation and wrath on those who neglect the great offered salvation, he will come again in power and great glory. To this second advent, also, the Church would have her members now direct their attention. Be it their care, by a careful perusal of what the Holy Scriptures reveal on that momentous subject, to reflect most seriously on the certainty and circumstances of Christ's coming to judgment—on the strict scrutiny he will then institute into the thoughts, words, and actions, of all who will have been placed in this state of probation—on the consequent awful responsibility under which we now think, and speak, and act—and on the issue of that great and dreadful judgment—a call to everlasting happiness in heaven, or a condemnation to the everlasting misery of hell. Let them especially bear in mind the cardinal truth revealed in almost every page of the New Testament, that it is only by a true and living faith in him as our *Redeemer*, manifested by sincere devotion to him, and conscientious observance of his holy law and will, that we can expect to escape the severity of his *justice*, or be partakers of the rich blessings of his *mercy*, as our *Judge*.

WEDNESDAY, the 20th; FRIDAY, the 22d; SATURDAY, the 23d.

*Ember Days.*

IT was proposed\* to consider, under the head of *Ember Days*, at the

four periods of their occurrence during the present year, the *character of the Christian ministry*, the *appointed mode of admission to it*, its *duties*, and its *qualifications*. The two first heads having been noticed,\* the remaining now offer themselves.

The duties of the Christian minister may be divided into public, parochial, and personal; and arise out of that divine commission which entitles him to act for God with man, and for man with God.

His public duties, in the first of these functions, include the administration of the sacraments, and the preaching of the Gospel.

First, the administration of the sacraments—*Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*.

That the administration of baptism is one of the peculiar duties of the ministry, appears from the Scripture view of its nature and effects. To enter fully into the detail of this, would be inconsistent with the limits now necessary to be observed. The substance of what the writer would say, may be found in a communication to this work, under the signature of N. L. K. The reader is therefore particularly requested to refer to the said communication, which appears in Vol. III. The portion of it applicable to the present subject, commences on page 140, first column, last paragraph, and extends to the last paragraph, page 142, column 1. It is hoped that it is there shown to be sound evangelical doctrine, that baptism is admission into that covenant in which God condescends to stand with his people, pledging himself to confer his grace and everlasting favour, on condition of their faith and obedience. Unlike human covenants, however, in which the parties are upon an equality, all the favour is here conferred by God, and all the benefit received by man. Admission, therefore, to the privileges of the covenant, must be solely a grant on the part of God. Consequently the rite, which he has been pleased to appoint, for the bringing of the parties into the covenant, must be ad-

\* Page 62 of this volume.

\* Pages 62, and 279, of this volume.

ministered by him, or by an officer appointed to act in his name. The administering of this rite, therefore, becomes an appropriate and peculiar function of their office who "are ambassadors for Christ, by" whom "God" speaks, and who act "in Christ's stead;"\* "unto" whom "a dispensation of the Gospel is committed;"† and who are vested with "the ministry of reconciliation" between God and man.‡ Accordingly, the discipling of "all nations" by "baptizing them,"§ was a part of the commission given by Christ to the ministers of his religion; and wherever notice is subsequently taken in Scripture of the administration of this ordinance, there is either formal mention of its having been by an apostle or other minister; or the context naturally leads to such a construction; or there is an entire absence of all allusion to the administrator, and, consequently, a call for such a supposition in the case, as is most consistent with the fair rule of interpretation, which requires that what is doubtful, should be judged of by what is clear and evident. And we may add, farther, that although early practice may seem to deprive the sentiments now expressed, of the important argument drawn from the usage of the primitive Church, as a fair interpreter of Scripture; yet the evidence of departure, in practice, from what is here deemed scriptural, does not carry it higher than about 200 years after our Lord's ministry, and clearly intimates it to have been very cautiously guarded against being viewed as a safe and proper dependence, in any other than cases of the most extreme emergency. Indeed, there is very strong proof that the error in question would not have been introduced, but as an effect of the superstitious idea of the impossibility of salvation without baptism.

What a high and holy function of the Gospel ministry, is the administration of Christian baptism! What praise to God should it excite in those who are called to it, that they are ad-

mitted to the exalted honour of acting in his name, and placing his seal to the covenant, in which grace and everlasting life are made the privilege of the party thus admitted! What fervent prayers should it dictate that there may be a fulfilment of those conditions, without which the privilege must be forfeited, and the awful guilt incurred of having rendered null a sacrament by which God designed the sanctification and salvation of the recipient!

It is also *his* part who ministers in holy things, to stand in Christ's stead, and do that which he did, and commanded his ministers to do in remembrance of him, when he made the solemn offering of himself for the sins of men—to take bread, bless it, break it, pronounce over it Christ's powerful words, *This is my body*—to take the cup, and pronounce over it the words, *This is my blood*—to eat the bread, and drink of the cup—and give them to be eaten and drunk by his disciples.\* Thus it is his sacred province to prepare, and receive men to that feast in which they are declared by the word of God to "shew the Lord's death."† It is his office to "bless" that "cup of blessing which is the communion of the *blood of Christ*," and "break" that "bread which is the communion of the *body of Christ*."‡ His, therefore, is that office of infinite moment, being Christ's agent in admitting men to the performance of a duty thus enforced by Christ himself:—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink of his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."§

In this respect, too, into what a high and holy office is the Christian minister admitted! How intimately connected with their salvation should its functions be regarded, by those to whom he ministers! How great the

\* 2 Cor. v. 20.      † 1 Cor. ix. 17.  
‡ 2 Cor. v. 18.      § St. Mat. xxviii. 19.

\* St. Matt. xxvi. 26—28. St. Mark xiv. 22—24. St. Luke xxii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. xi. 23—25.  
† 1 Cor. xi. 26.      ‡ 1 Cor. x. 16.  
§ St. John vi. 53, &c.

value which they should set upon them ! How grateful, constant, and anxious should be the attendance which they bestow on them !

The *preaching of the Gospel* is another duty of the Christian minister, considered as God's representative to the people. It may be regarded as including all the various modes of publicly imparting instruction and consolation.

Under this head is properly included the public reading of the Holy Scriptures. In this exercise, the minister is to be viewed in a different light than merely as a fellow Christian, reading, for mutual edification and comfort, the lively oracles. He is to be regarded as sharing the commission with which those holy men were vested who penned the inspired pages. Attention is to be paid to him, as if he were the prophet, the evangelist, or the apostle, again announcing the will and the ways of God ; and, indeed, as one who shares the transcendent honour conferred by the declaration of the Son of God—"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."\*

Another branch of public preaching is the reading of the various exhortations, and other writings, not canonical, appointed in the service of the Church.

Under this head, particular attention is due to the declaration of absolution or forgiveness of sins, and to the sacerdotal benediction.

When Christ pronounced, as a part of the commission of his ministering servants—"Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,"† there certainly must be considered as included, something more than the mere assurance of divine mercy and forgiveness, which any Christian may give to another. We can regard it no otherwise than as conferring a right *authoritatively* to declare it, in connexion with the required conditions of penitence and faith, and so to declare it, as thereby to act in God's name, and be his agent for the *conveyance* to the penitent and faithful, of the pardoning mercy thus

announced. So, also, in blessing the people in the name of God, his minister must be regarded as fulfilling, in part, the function of *ambassador for God*, and as *conferring* his benediction on those who have the Gospel requisites for due preparation to receive it.

The last branch of preaching are the elucidations of holy writ, and the enforcing of its motives and sanctions, which the Christian minister is to present, as the fruit of his own studies, reflections, and labours. However obvious may be the duty of private Christians to labour, in their respective spheres, for the instruction of the ignorant, the reclaiming of the vicious, or the administering of Gospel consolation, it is obvious, on the whole face of Scripture, that preaching, or *public teaching*, is the prerogative of those only who are divinely commissioned ; and that the assuming of it by others, is an infringement of divinely constituted order.

This duty must be regulated solely by the Gospel, in its purity, simplicity, and fulness. Whatever is a departure from that is an abuse of the heavenly commission ; while a course of preaching deficient in any of its particulars is a failure of fidelity. No display of learning or talents, no fear of incurring the displeasure of hearers, no attachment to popular theories, will, for a moment, draw the faithful pastor from true Gospel preaching, or tempt him to omit any truth or duty essential to the integrity of the evangelical system.

A very interesting, and highly important branch of this duty, is the humbler and more simple mode of preaching, denominated catechetical instruction. This is so essential to the laying of a good foundation for the Christian life, that the inquiry should come home to the conscience of every pastor, whether, in attention to the varied duties of his office, he bestows on this the time and care which its importance justly demands.

As the minister of heaven is commissioned to appear in the presence of God in behalf of his people, it is a function of his office, to *lead the devotions of the assemblies* of the

\* St. John xx. 21.      † St. John xx. 23.  
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Church. Here, too, he should be regarded otherwise than as one of a congregation of Christians conducting the performance of public service. It should be considered by them a privilege and blessing, to have herein the services of one who can appear before the throne of the heavenly grace, in the character of a commissioned minister of him who sitteth thereon—and having, as it were, gone out from the court of heaven, to announce the saving merits of the great atonement, returns thither to plead them for himself, and in behalf of the people to whom he has been sent.

Besides these *public*, there are various *parochial* duties appertaining to the Christian pastor's office. There are those of his flock whom sickness or infirmity prevents from attendance on the public celebrations of the Church. These he is to seek out, and impart to them the instructions, the calls, and the consolations of the Gospel. On the consciences of the careless and the vicious, he is, as opportunity affords, in private intercourse, to press the warnings, the threatenings, and the encouragements of religion. When his people would enter into that holy and honourable state which unites in one their interests and destinies through life, it is his to receive their mutual vows, to commend them to the care and kindness of their heavenly Father, and to pronounce upon them the benediction of the Church. Those who suffer the trials of misfortune or bereavement, he is to visit in their affliction. To the dying Christian, he is to administer the consolations of religion. When his lifeless remains are to be made the subject of the irrevocable decree, "unto dust shalt thou return," it is his to improve the melancholy occasion, and seek to make it conducive to the spiritual welfare of the living, by the holy solemnities with which the Church would hallow it. In fine, it is his duty, as far as circumstances will permit, to maintain that constant intercourse with the people of his charge, which will be conducive to the securing for him of such a standing in their respect, affection, and confidence, as

will facilitate the exercise of his ministry among them, and afford reasonable ground for anticipating its success.

There is, farther, another highly important class of duties devolving on the ministers of religion—those which arise out of their connexion with the Church at large, and have for their object the promotion of her welfare, and the extending of her borders. It is no light trust that is reposed in them by their Divine Master, when he commits to them the care of that holy Church which he died to purchase to himself, and which, it is his declared will, shall be his instrument for the preserving and extending of true religion, and for promoting the sanctification and salvation of the human race. No slight responsibility rests upon them, when they are placed in situations affording peculiar means, and opening peculiar opportunities for contributing to her purity, unity, prosperity, and enlargement.

What may be termed the *personal* duties of the Christian minister arise out of the *qualifications* for his office, and will, therefore, be considered in conjunction with them.

The foundation of them all, is *true piety*; in which are included the holding of the faith and uniform observance of the religious and moral precepts of the Gospel. Awful is the extent of his guilt, who, ministering in holy things, is himself the servant of sin. Tremendous must be his condemnation, who, bearing the message of the Lord of Hosts—acting as his representative, in the admission of men into covenant with him—blessing, and breaking, and distributing the symbols of the precious body and blood of the Lamb—time after time, professing to repent, to believe, and to pray, in the touching language of a liturgy consecrated by the approval, the use, and the blood of martyrs,—is yet *his servant*, who is the sworn and eternal enemy of God—is yet, by his example, bringing many souls to perdition, and by his life and conversation, dishonouring God, putting the Saviour to an open shame, and grieving the divine Sanctifier of the faith.

ful!—How assiduously will the conscientious pastor apply himself to those duties, and the cultivation of those graces and virtues, which are connected with the true faith and piety of the Gospel! These he regards as infinitely raised in importance, above all other qualifications for his office. For them, he first provides. He gladly gives them preference to all other pursuits, and all other enjoyments. First securing time and care sufficient for attending to those means of grace which are afforded by the private exercise and public ordinances of religion, he keeps in entire subservience to them whatever has for its object intellectual improvement, and social pleasure or recreation. Thus, deeply impressed himself with the sacred truths he preaches, and in his own heart and life, exemplifying the Christian graces he recommends, he will command all that influence to which holy sincerity is entitled, and will further the design of his public ministry, by the more impressive and effectual preaching of a godly life and conversation. He will be more respected and beloved by good men, than mere talents can make him. He will be found to have been a faithful servant, in that day when man's wisdom, if it formed the principal characteristic of the servant of the altar, will be found to be but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal—lighter than vanity, and worse than nothing.

But let not the particularity and earnestness with which it has been thought proper to dwell on this head, be construed into a disposition to set aside, as unnecessary or unimportant, the qualification of competent advancement in human science. This would be to pour contempt on the opinions and practice of the best men, and purest churches, in all ages. It would be to oppose uniform and universal experience. It would be to slight the only ordinary mean God has appointed for accomplishing that end, which, in the first days of the Church, was effected by the extraordinary imparting of extensive knowledge. There is a great fallacy in the argument drawn from the fact of the apostles

having been humble and illiterate men, in favour of the theory that human learning is not essential to due preparation for the ministry. The end now accomplished by study, was effected, in their case, by supernatural illumination. They were men of most extensive learning; miraculously so indeed. And as miracles have now ceased, the ability they had to expound the sacred writings, and recommend the religion they taught both to the refined and inquisitive mind of the learned, and the humbler capacity of the ignorant, is now to be attained by the Divine blessing upon diligent application to the various branches of learning, which throw light on the original languages of the Holy Scriptures—on the contemporary opinions, usages, and civil institutions, to which they so frequently refer—on the proofs of Divine wisdom and control, in the works and course of nature—and on the science of the human mind, so illustrative of the necessity, benefit, and perfection of the Christian system.

To the qualifications of eminent piety and extensive learning, the minister of the Gospel should add, a *deep interest in the work in which he is engaged*, an *ardent love of it*, *affection for his people*, and *a ruling solicitude and anxiety to promote their spiritual and eternal welfare*. He should engage with *zeal* in all his duties, from a consideration of their infinite moment, and of their connexion with the everlasting destiny of himself, and of those to whom he ministers. He should cultivate a *knowledge of human nature*, and strive to govern his whole deportment by the dictates of a judicious and well regulated, but not a timid and time-serving, *prudence*. He will require great *resolution*, *firmness*, and *independence* of mind, to guard against suffering a desire to please, or a love of popularity or applause, to obtain an undue influence, to the disparagement of his high and holy station—to the dishonour of him by whom he is sent—and to the awful danger, to himself and his people, of withholding, because not acceptable to them, or not promotive of his own popularity, any truth connected with

that purity and integrity of evangelical doctrine and order, which is set forth in Holy Scripture, and which characterized the Church as first established by its Divine Head.

The Christian minister should be especially careful to cultivate those evangelical graces of *humility, disinterestedness, meekness, docility, love of order, and deference for authority*, the influence of which is necessary to preserve him from the presumptuous guilt of making the ministry of the meek and lowly Jesus, a mean for the gratification of his vanity, or the effecting of designs of disorganization and self-exaltation.

Lastly, he will ever find it necessary to add to all other qualifications, *unyielding patience, and unwearied perseverance.*

It is believed that under the heads which have now been enumerated, may be comprised the duties and qualifications of the Gospel ministry. Let the reflections thence arising come home to the heart of every one who has been admitted to so high a dignity, and excite the utmost solicitude and endeavour, through Divine grace, diligently sought and cultivated, that he be not found wanting. Let them be cherished by those who have the ministry in view, and lead to greatest care that they have a just sense of the awful responsibility that will rest upon them, and most fervent prayers that they may have grace faithfully to discharge it. Let them induce those who are intrusted by the Church with the recommendation of candidates for holy orders, or with conferring them upon them, to take good heed lest they be instrumental to the admission of unfit persons, and, thereby, to the extensive injury of the sacred cause of religion, and the imminent hazard of immortal souls. Let them lead every pious Christian to pray for the Divine guidance in the choice of persons to receive the heavenly commission, and for the Divine assistance, direction, and blessing to those who are prosecuting its high, holy, and momentous functions; and induce liberal contributions and exertions in aid of the Church's efforts for the training of

a learned, pious, and orthodox ministry; that the glory of God, the enlargement and purity of the Church militant, and the increase of that triumphant, may be the blessed result, to the everlasting praise of his glorious grace who "loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water, by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish,"\* as becomes "his body,"† in which his "members,"‡ "having nourishment ministered from," him, its Divine "Head," are to increase "with the increase of God,"§ "till" they "all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;"|| in which they enjoy communion with "the heavenly Jerusalem, an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect;"|| and in which, therefore, they are to be prepared to join that blessed Church triumphant where the praises of God and of the Lamb are chanted for ever and ever.

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THURSDAY, the 21st.

*St. Thomas, the Apostle.*

Two or three incidents related in the New Testament of this Apostle may be made the subjects of profitable reflection.

The first furnishes very interesting evidence of affectionate attachment to his Lord. Jesus was about going into Judea, for the benevolent purpose of raising his friend Lazarus from the dead. His disciples, knowing the cruel and persecuting designs of the Jews, were unwilling that he should go thither. St. Thomas, however, fearing no danger in the society of his beloved Master, made "unto his fellow-disciples" the proposition so creditable to his feelings of since-

\* Ephes. v. 25, 26, 27.

† 1 Cor. xii. 27.

‡ Ephes. iv. 13.

§ Ephes. i. 23.

|| Col. ii. 19.

¶ Heb. xii. 23, 23.

rity and attachment—"Let us also go, that we may die with him."\* This should be the language of all good Christians. They should follow Christ, through whatever privations or dangers his service may lead. With him for a refuge and strength, they have nothing to fear. Following those steps of his most holy life which lay through perils, and sufferings, and those of his faithful followers who, in all ages, have been called to take up their cross, they will have all the support and encouragement that can flow from examples of fortitude and submission; and all that is richly imparted by *his* grace, who, having been tempted like as we are, is able to succour those who pass through the like trials and dangers. Following him, even unto the grave and gate of death, they will be admitted to the exalted privilege purchased by his atonement, passing with him to a glorious resurrection.

This apostle, like his colleagues, was slow of heart to receive all the truths of that new system of religion into which their Master was instructing them. We see an instance of this in his inquiry of Jesus, when he was speaking to them of the joys he was going to prepare for his faithful followers:—"Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?"† With the meekness and forbearance which his Lord always manifested, he did not chide him, but only reminded him of the cardinal truth which he had so often inculcated—"I am the way, and the truth, and the life." This is a most gracious answer, which leaves no room to the seeking Christian, to be mistaken as to the way in which he can go "unto the Father." Christ is the way. Let his will be learned, and his direction followed. They will lead and bring the Christian pilgrim to God, his exceeding joy. They are to be discovered by faithful study of the revelation he has given, and by the illumination and guidance of that heavenly grace, for the attainment of which he has prescribed the use of

appointed means, and promised to that use, applied in the true spirit of the Gospel, his effectual blessing.

The last particular notice of this apostle comprises several interesting particulars relating to our Lord's resurrection. He was not with the other apostles, when Jesus first appeared to their collected body, after he had risen. He refused to believe that so miraculous an event had occurred, without actually probing the wounds his Lord had received, in order to the perfect identifying of his person. Christ, in the exercise of his wonted clemency and forbearance, determined to yield to his request, however unreasonable. When, therefore, he again appeared to his disciples, he called to Thomas, and offered him the evidence he had asked. It produced the necessary result—deep and full conviction. This was declared in the strong exclamation—"My Lord, and my God."\* It was a just conclusion, that if he, who, having claimed to be "one" with the "Father,"† having challenged to himself "honour" equal to that which is due to that Almighty "Father,"‡ having claimed the power of raising himself from the dead,§ and promised to exert it||—it was a just and necessary conclusion, that if he who thus raised pretensions which, in a mere man, could possibly have been nothing short of the grossest blasphemy, did indeed display that unequivocal token of heaven's sanction and approbation—he could not be mere man, or any other creature, but, if truth is to be expected in heavenly attestation, must be the Lord God.

Our Saviour, having thus rescued him from doubt, gave him a just rebuke for not having before yielded assent to the truth of his resurrection—"Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."|| There were circumstances connected with this subject which, added to the united testimony of his

\* St. John xi. 16.

† St. John xiv. 5.

• St. John xx. 28.

† St. John x. 30.

‡ St. John v. 23.

§ St. John x. 18.

|| St. John ii. 19.

¶ St. John xx. 29.

colleagues, should have convinced St. Thomas, without the sensible demonstration he had demanded.

It is proof of a very unreasonable and unphilosophical mind, to refuse assent without the *greatest possible* evidence. That which is *sufficient* should be satisfactory. If all belief were limited by the proof which our senses only afford, there would be no distinction, in this case, between man and brute. It is one of the privileges of the former to add to what he knows upon the immediate authority of personal experience and observation, that incomparably greater and more important range of knowledge, which is derived from the investigation of testimony, the just inference of effect from cause, and the discovery of the latter, by the study of the former.

Infidelity proudly asks for irresistible evidence, before it will lay aside its doubts, and assent to the truth of revelation, and this, in perhaps every case, without bestowing a thought on the evidence that is adduced. We are asked to show miracles now, in order to prove that they are practicable; and to produce such testimony as none but madmen can resist, if we would make good the claims of Christianity to be the divinely appointed mode of saving the souls of men.

Christianity, however, like the boasted natural religion of these objectors, and like whatever of true philosophy they possess, offers testimony which she avers to be sufficient for the conviction of a sober and reasonable mind; and, therefore, sufficient for dealing with men as moral agents. She asks a candid and impartial investigation of that testimony, and confidently expects, as the result, acknowledgment that it is enough, and more than enough, for the conviction of the candid and impartial.

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MONDAY, the 25th.

*The Nativity of our Lord, or the Birth-Day of Christ, commonly called Christmas-Day.*

On this great festival, which commemorates the birth of our Lord, we are naturally led to inquire into his *nature*, and his *offices*.

What is the nature of him, who, as at this time, is born into the world? It can, of course, be learned only from Revelation.

When we perceive that he is designated in Scripture as the woman's "Seed,"<sup>a</sup> as the "Seed" of Abraham,<sup>b</sup> of Isaac,<sup>c</sup> and of Jacob,<sup>d</sup> and as the "Seed,"<sup>e</sup> the "Branch,"<sup>f</sup> "the Offspring,"<sup>g</sup> and "the Son of David,"<sup>h</sup> when we hear him styled "a Man" who should "be as an hiding-place from the wind,"<sup>i</sup> "a Man whom a woman should compass,"<sup>j</sup> "a Man of sorrows,"<sup>k</sup> when we perceive his genealogy accurately laid down, from Abraham, on his supposed father's side, by St. Matthew,<sup>l</sup> and from Adam, on his mother's, by St. Luke;<sup>m</sup> when we hear him called by his great forerunner, "a Man which is preferred before" him,<sup>n</sup> —by himself, "a Man that hath told the truth";<sup>o</sup> —and by St. Peter, "a Man approved of God";<sup>p</sup> and when, finally, in his office of "Mediator between God and men," he is represented as "the Man Christ Jesus";<sup>q</sup> —we are led to the necessary conclusion, that he whose birth we celebrate is a *Man*. The heretical idea of his being a creature of higher order, is utterly destitute of scriptural foundation. "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."<sup>r</sup>

But this truth must be taken in conjunction with that which appears in the prophetic designation of him as "Immanuel,"<sup>s</sup> "which, being interpreted, is God WITH US,"<sup>t</sup> as "the MIGHTY GOD," and "the EVERLASTING FATHER";<sup>u</sup> in his declarations of himself—"I and my Father are One,"<sup>v</sup> "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father";<sup>w</sup> and in the language of his

<sup>a</sup> Gen. iii. 15.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xxii. 18.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xxvi. 4.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xxviii. 14.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. i. 3.

<sup>f</sup> Jer. xxiii. 5.

<sup>g</sup> Rev. xxii. 16.

<sup>h</sup> St. Matt. xxi. 9.

<sup>i</sup> Isa. xxxii. 2.

<sup>j</sup> Jer. xxxi. 22.

<sup>k</sup> Isa. liii. 3.

<sup>l</sup> chap. i.

<sup>m</sup> chap. iii. 23, &c.

<sup>n</sup> St. John i. 30.

<sup>o</sup> St. John. viii. 40.

<sup>o</sup> Acts ii. 22.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>r</sup> Heb. ii. 16.

<sup>s</sup> Isa. vii. 14.

<sup>s</sup> St. Matt. i. 23.

<sup>u</sup> Isa. ix. 6.

<sup>u</sup> St. John x. 30.

<sup>w</sup> St. John xiv. 9.

inspired apostles—"The Word was God, all things were made by him,"\* he "is the TRUE GOD,"† "Christ is over all, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER,"‡ "Christ is THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, the KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS,"§ "GOD was manifest in the flesh."||

How this double nature can exist in him whose birth we celebrate, how he can be thus both man and God, they may ask, who, by searching can find out God, and the Almighty, unto perfection. That *he can* take to himself the human nature, or any other within the compass of his creative power, none who acknowledge his omnipotence can deny. How he can effect it, man has not the most distant right to expect to be informed; and without instruction from God himself, it is the height of presumption for him to suppose he can possibly know. Whether God has been pleased to effect so mysterious an union, is to be learned from his own word. In the two propositions, now thence clearly adduced, that Christ was Man, and Christ was God, we see that such has been his pleasure. Leaving it, then, to those who impiously aim at bringing the Infinite to a level with their finite comprehensions, to doubt of this, because they cannot understand it, or to attempt to render it thoroughly comprehensible—let the humble Christian be satisfied to trust the word of God, and in this mysterious truth, see cause to bless the infinity of Divine wisdom and goodness, in thus providing for the all-sufficient discharge of the gracious offices sustained by Christ.

For his chief office of Redeemer, this union of the Divine and human natures, eminently qualified him. While the latter enabled him to undergo the sufferings and death essential to that office, the former gave to these a value which that of no created being could possess, an infinity of merit which could not possibly belong to any who had any sin of his own for which to answer. It also enabled him to sus-

tain that which no creature could possibly have borne—the penalty incurred by the accumulated guilt of the *whole world*.

But besides dying for the sins of men, Messiah perfectly fulfilled the law of God. As he was Divine, this, of course, was perfectly gratuitous. It was the result of no possible claim upon him. It, therefore, deserved reward; and this must be proportioned to the infinity of that merit which must attach to him as God. Of course, being God, this reward could not be needed by himself. It is, therefore, his to give to whom he will. Thus are the gifts of grace conferred upon his people, who, otherwise, had not been justified in the faintest hope of them.

Another office of him whose birth we now celebrate, is the promulgating of a religion, the doctrines and precepts of which embrace the various conditions required of us in order to our being fully benefited by his mediation between God and us.

A special branch of this office, is his establishing of a Church, in which, as his body, his people, as the members, are to be united to him; and in which are provided the means he has promised to bless with those effusions of Divine grace, which are essential to the securing of their holiness here, and everlasting happiness hereafter.

Therefore, would we rightly celebrate this exalted festival, we must receive Christ, as he is revealed to us, in his character of both God and man; we must repose, with undivided faith in its merits, on his mediation, as alone sufficient to recommend us to the favour of God, and sanction our hope of his mercy and blessing; we must, therefore, feel the burden of those sins which rendered necessary the interposition of his love; we must resolve to renounce them, as the required condition of our being saved by him from their eternal consequences; we must give all diligence in applying to those means of grace, and to that course of religious and moral duty, which he has appointed as evidences of the sincerity of those who profess to be his. Awfully aggravated will

\* St. John i. 1, 3.

† 1 St. John v. 20.

‡ Rom. ix. 5.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15.

|| 1 Tim. iii. 16.

be our guilt, if we refuse to be sanctified and saved by his unspeakable mercy. Very unseasonable is our joy, if, estranged in heart and life, from the pure and holy religion which he designs for our good, we ought rather to weep and lament for the miseries which will justly come upon us, unless we turn unto him, with hearty repentance and true faith. As at this time coming as our Redeemer, he will again come, as our Judge. Oh, then, how shall they appear who have set at nought his mercy, and counted his blood of the covenant an unholy thing!—They only have now cause for joy, who, truly receiving Christ in the gracious offices in which he comes, are united to him by a true and living faith. When he comes again, they will behold him with pleasure; they will be blessed with the mild aspect, and kind accents, of his love; they will pass with him to the everlasting joy of his Father and their Father, his God and their God.

TUESDAY, the 26th.

St. Stephen, the Martyr.

This Saint has been emphatically styled by the Church, *the Martyr*, probably on account of the distinguished honour of his having been the first to suffer death in the cause of Christ. For the same reason, his memory is celebrated immediately after the festival of the Nativity.

St. Stephen was one of the seven who were ordained by the apostles on the occasion mentioned in the sixth chapter of the Acts. With regard to the nature of the office to which they were admitted, there is a difference of opinion. The requisition that they should be “men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom”—their having been set apart by prayer, and the laying on of the apostles’ hands—one of them (St. Stephen) being immediately represented as a leading preacher and defender of the Christian faith—and another (St. Philip) being soon noticed as both preaching and baptizing†—are

facts which, it would seem, could not admit of a departure from the current sense of Christian antiquity, that they were ordained to the ministry of the Church. The mention, in the Epistles, of the office of a *deacon*, as a grade of the ministry, evidently distinguishes from the apostles, and from Elders, and inferior to both, justifies the farther conclusion, coinciding with the same primitive sentiment, that the seven, obviously distinct from the apostles and the seventy, were now admitted deacons.

The character of St. Stephen is expressed, with brevity indeed, but with a fulness of import to which nothing could be added—“*A man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*,”\*

However the latter expression may refer to the miraculous powers with which he was invested, it undoubtedly embraced also those ordinary gifts and graces of the Spirit which make up the Christian’s character. And in this sense, it must be applicable to every one who would maintain consistency of Christian profession. And the most prominent of those graces, and that, indeed, which must enter, as a constituent part, into every other, is *faith*—which unites man to Christ, is the medium of communication with him, and is essential to the enjoyment of the blessings of his religion.

The genuineness of his faith, and the sanctifying and supporting influences of the Holy Ghost, were peculiarly manifested at the close of the very short ministry of this holy man. When summoned before the council at which he was to plead his cause, and the assembling of which was with the deliberate determination of taking away his life, the sweet consciousness of rectitude, the holy resolution of remaining firm even unto death, sure confidence in the supporting power of his Master, lively solicitude in the sacred cause in which he was engaged, and kind and benevolent feelings even towards his bitter persecutors, gave their characteristic expressions to his countenance, so that “all that

\* Acts vi. 3. † verse 6.

† Acts viii. 5—12.

\* Acts vi. 5.

sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face, as it had been the face of an angel.”\*

Having proceeded to a considerable length in his defence, the rage of his adversaries could be no longer restrained. “They were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth.”† He knew in whom he trusted in this near approach of danger. “He looked up steadfastly into heaven.”‡ His trust was not in vain. His faithful look was answered. He was permitted to “see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.”§ Thither, in all his sufferings here upon earth, should every pious Christian look. By the eye of faith, he will see him who is ever a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Danger is never so near, but that he is nearer still. Necessity is never so great, but that he is altogether equal to its relief. He requires but to be sought, to be looked to, with the eye of true faith, and the riches of his mercy will be freely extended.

Now came the closest proof of the genuineness of the faith, and the sufficiency of the spiritual influences which characterized this holy martyr. He is cast out of the city, and they are stoning him.|| What is the faith which now supports him? Is it that, which, resting on distortions of holy writ—fabricated by the pride of the weak and corrupted intellect of man—and claiming to be liberal, because of lawless indifference to the greatest and most precious truths of the Gospel—is magnified as the only faith to which human reason can assent,—the faith which would strip of his divinity the eternal Son of the Most High God?—Hear the prayer it dictates—“**LORD JESUS, RECEIVE MY SPIRIT!**”¶ And did he die with the purpose of idolatry in his heart, and its impious invocation on his lips? Could he have been so grossly perverted, as to have deified the mere humanity of his Master? Selected for the

soundness of his faith, and the spirituality of his life, and, in consideration of them, just ordained by the blessed apostles themselves, is he ignorant of the pure doctrine which they inculcate, or guilty of wilful departure from it, in a matter so full of blasphemy and idolatry? What shall we think of that boasted refinement and enlargement of intellect, which can, for a moment, harbour such a conclusion? What of the real use or merit of the boasted learning, which can leave the mind exposed to the weakness and folly (God grant it may be nothing worse!) of thus concluding?—No: the dying martyr’s prayer is the prayer of true faith, and of sound and enlightened reason. He knew that Jesus was he who heareth prayer, and is willing and able to answer it.—What pity, then, should we feel for the weakness, and what horror of the impiety, of that system of professed Christianity which withdraws from him this bounden offering, and even acknowledgment of the attributes which render it his due. In the spirit of the farther supplication of the blessed saint whose memory we now delight to honour, we should raise, in behalf of those whom this system has deluded, the ejaculation—“Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”\* May Jesus extend mercy, even to those who will not stoop to ask it!

What genuine influence of the mild, patient, forgiving temper of the Gospel does this petition breathe! How infinitely, not only in a religious point of view, but also in the scale of moral worth and dignity of character, does it raise him who offers it above the wretched slave of anger, malice, and revenge!

With such a spirit of faith and Christian charity, we need not wonder that his dissolution should be recorded in the beautifully figurative terms, “he fell asleep.”† Gentle, even amidst the most peculiar horrors, is the death of him who has Jesus for the guardian of his soul. O, who will be the victim of the cold and cheerless doctrine which will not

\* Acts vi. 15.

† Acts vii. 54.

‡ Acts vii. 55.

§ Acts vii. 56.

|| Acts vii. 58.

¶ Acts vii. 59.

\* Acts vi. 60.

† idem.

own and seek him as such? Who, for a few fleeting and deceitful pleasures, will forfeit that support and comfort in nature's last trial, which can come but from one source—JESUS, who died that he might overcome death, and give the victory to his faithful people?

WEDNESDAY, the 27th,  
St. John, the Evangelist.

Many of the leading events recorded of this eminent apostle were noticed under the head of the festival commemorative of his brother St. James,\* in whose company they occurred.

It was the distinguished honour of this saint to be “the disciple whom Jesus loved;”† *i. e.* for whom he entertained a *special* regard and affection. In this instance, and in that of Lazarus and his sisters,‡ Jesus set an example inculcating the virtue of special friendship, amiable in itself, the source of the purest earthly joys, and perfectly consistent with the most enlarged exercise of Christian love and kindness.

The friendship between our Lord and his disciple St. John, was of the purest and truest kind. At the last interview, before his death, between Jesus and the collected body of his apostles, it admitted him to the privilege, so indicative of tenderness and affection, of “leaning on Jesus’ bosom.”§ In Gethsemane, where the severest of his sorrows began to come upon his Lord, it entitled him to be one of the three chosen to be the companions of his grief.|| It carried him to the foot of the cross, and was there honoured with the distinguished confidence of having the mother of his dying Master committed to his charge.¶ It proved that the confidence was not misplaced, by his making her, “from that hour,” an inmate of his house. It animated him with zeal, anxiety, and joy, superior

even to those of St. Peter, who was so characterized by warmth of feeling, in their eagerness to visit the sepulchre from which their Lord was reported to have been taken.\*

Such was the sincerity, warmth, and mutual confidence of the friendship which subsisted between Jesus and the apostle of this day. It was a friendship of a truly holy character, cemented by religious principles, and receiving an unspeakable augmentation of happiness from religious sympathies, hopes, and consolations.—And those friendships, truly, are ever the most ardent, the most sincere, disinterested, and happy, which are regulated and sanctified by the principles of the Gospel. There is an exquisite delight in uniting in its duties, and sharing in its hopes, to which nothing connected with this world only can be compared. That feeling especially which arises out of the sure confidence of having attachments formed on earth, perfected and eternally prolonged in heaven, is one, against the sanctity and purity of which it were an offence to attempt its description. It can only be *felt*, and is a consummation of social felicity, with which all its other recommendations have nothing that can be compared.

Let this apostle’s love of his Divine Master induce the humble emulation of all who profess and call themselves Christians. Jesus has to them all the recommendations he had to him. He is still the same Lord, able and willing to reward affectionate fidelity. And if we act upon the truly rational and scriptural principle of loving because we were first beloved, to whom should we be devoted with so much ardour of undivided affection, as to him who, *very God, became man for our sakes, and, as such, suffered and died to appease the wrath of God, revealed from heaven against our sins, and thus open for us a way to the favour of God, and the consequent enjoyment of his tender mercies in this world, and the unspeakable happiness*

\* Page 215 of this volume.

† St. John xxi. 20.      ‡ St. John xi.

§ St. John xiii. 23.      || St. Mark xiv. 33.

¶ St. John xix. 26, 27.

\* St. John xx. 4.

of his everlasting presence in the world to come! Union with him by that faith which works by *love*, is the condition he requires for our enjoyment of the blessings he came to bestow. It will minister comfort in every trial of the world, and support in the awful hour of dissolution; and receive the rich reward of those tokens of his love which he has promised as their inheritance who attain to being with him in the kingdom of his glory.

The love of the Saviour was especially experienced by this saint when the insatiate fury which had pursued to cruel deaths his companions in the Gospel, lit upon him. He was thrown into a caldron of boiling oil; but death was averted. Through the power of his Divine Master, he was preserved unhurt. The same mighty Providence which was his support and deliverance in this hour of peculiar trial and necessity, is still at hand for the protection of all who trust in it. Nothing can hurt those who, with true faith, repose in the Lord Jehovah. He will deliver them out of all their calamities, either by a change of their condition here, or by overruling them to that spiritual good whose end is everlasting life.

The canonical writings of this apostle consist of his Gospel, three Epistles, and the Revelation. They speak the entire devotion of his thoughts and cares to the glory of his Divine Master, and the interests of his religion. He wrote, as history evinces, with the special view of adding to what the other apostles had penned, the most striking proofs furnished by our Saviour's life and instructions, of his divinity, in order to counteract the pernicious effect of early heresies, which denied that fundamental doctrine. He has, indeed, furnished the Christian cause with weapons for the defence of that doctrine, which secure it against the success of either the bold attacks, or subtle undernings of infidelity and heresy.

With this principal feature in the *faith*, St. John eminently united that of the *morality* of the Gospel—*Christian charity*. Love is breathed in al-

most every line he wrote, is inculcated with all the earnestness which enlightened zeal can impart, and is placed on the highest ground, by being urged upon *principles*, and connected with *sanctions* which render it a peculiarly *evangelical* virtue. At a very advanced period of life, when he could no longer attend to the ordinary ministrations of his office, he would be led to the assemblies of his people, and though he could say no more, address them in the exhortation, short, indeed, but full of meaning—*Little children, love one another.*

In this truly Christian frame of mind, he died a natural death, venerable for virtues as for years, and was the only apostle who did not end his days in martyrdom.

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THURSDAY, the 28th.

*The Holy Innocents.*

The Gospel for the day contains the history of the event it celebrates.

The victims of Herod's cruel edict have ever been regarded by the Church as entitled to the distinction of martyrs, in as much as they died in the cause of Christ, and by their deaths, contributed to strengthen the evidence of his religion.

The several circumstances connected with this case, as recorded in the chapter whence the Gospel is taken, present a few heads of practical reflection.

The enormous guilt of Herod makes us shudder at the awful extent of human depravity. It may all, however, be resolved into the influence of unholy passions, to which, through our participation in that depravity, we all are exposed. The ground work of them appears to be *jealousy*—a passion ranking in deadly hostility to all that is good, virtuous, and amiable in the human character. It was excited by the title—*King of the Jews*, under which the Magi had inquired for the newly born Saviour. He was fearful of a rival, and formed the nefarious purpose of being rid of him, whatever might be the consequence.

This passion, let us remember, may exist, and exert a most vicious

and degrading influence, even though very far short, in its consequences, of the extreme of guilt to which it led, in the case now before us. By the production of hatred, calumny, and ever varying ill treatment, it exerts an influence over many minds having credit with others, and often perhaps deluded to give themselves credit for the possession of virtuous, amiable, and even pious dispositions. There is no evil principle more subtle in its nature, more imperceptible in its incipient operations, and more malignant in its effects. By constant self-watching, and especially by faithful seeking and improving of the sanctifying influences of Divine Grace, Christians should strive to keep themselves free from its degrading tyranny. Give it but indulgence, and its direct tendency is to perfect despotism over the mind.

No feature in the conduct of Herod on this occasion is more conspicuous than its *base hypocrisy*. He endeavoured to lure the wise men into subservience to his views, by pretending that his view in wishing to be informed where they should find the object of their search, was, that he might come and worship him also. Shuddering at the enormity of this guilt, let the Christian beware lest he share in it. Satan, we are told in Scripture, may be transformed into an angel of light; and there are, perhaps, few ways in which he can more successfully practise his arts, than by concealing them under the mask of religion. It behoves us all seriously to search and try our own hearts, whether the appearance of religion does not sometimes cover designs selfish, vain-glorious, uncharitable, or otherwise hostile to the Gospel of Christ. Such an inquiry, if not made here, will be made at the bar of God. Let us judge ourselves, that we be not judged of the Lord.

In the preservation of our Lord from the cruel design, as at this time formed against him, we see an evidence of that superintending and protecting Providence which is ever equal to the perfect security of those who trust in it. Let it be the Chris-

tian's firm confidence in every hour of danger and necessity. The wickedness of the wicked will be only so far permitted as God sees fit: the remainder of it he will restrain. Judgments and trials will be only so far suffered to be upon us, as is necessary to answer the good purposes by him designed. In this world, or in the next, happy deliverance will be the portion of all his people.

Very delightful is the change of reflection, when, from the sufferings of these little innocents in this world, we dwell on the state to which they were taken in the other. Very ample are the amends thus made by their heavenly Parent, for the seeming hardship of their being permitted to be the victims of the tyrant's cruelty. Let it, under all circumstances of trial, be the Christian's support and consolation, that they can last but a little while, and then, if it be not his own fault, will be followed by an infinity of happiness, compared with which, all suffering here ought not to be once mentioned.

The case of these innocents brings to mind the doctrine, so congenial with our ideas of the justice and mercy of our heavenly Father, and so full of consolation under the loss of infant objects of parental affection—the *certainty of the salvation of those who are taken out of the world, before the heavenly inheritance, purchased by Christ's atonement, can be forfeited by actual transgression.*

The denial of this doctrine is in too obvious contradiction to all that is holy, pure, just, and merciful in God, and to the revelation he has been pleased to make of his law and will, and is too obviously the result of blind adherence to a gloomy and unchristian system of theology, to need particular notice. And although, upon every sound principle of argument, the truth of this doctrine must utterly subvert the whole theory which attributes man's eternal destiny to an unconditional decree, neither a just view of those attributes of God which should command the honour and the love of his creatures, nor a just appreciation of what he has declared in his written

word, will suffer it to be doubted. It is a source of sure and evangelical comfort to the bereft parent. He knows that his loved infant is taken from much certain suffering, and perhaps from the forfeiture of heaven, to the eternal enjoyment of its glories and its bliss. He knows that although the child cannot return to him, he, if not wanting to himself, may go to it. The certainty that it is happy, and that he may share its happiness, infuses the calm feeling of cheerful submission to the will of God, and affords fresh encouragement to persevere in that walk of faith, through which he may pass to eternal re-union with the departed object of his affection.

Lastly—This festival should remind us of the cardinal truth of our holy religion, that unless we be converted, and become as little children, we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. With a sense of dependence, like theirs, we should feel that God's grace is alone sufficient, and place all our confidence in him. In their artlessness and simplicity, and their freedom from the pollution of actual sin, we should see a pattern, to be imitated by availing ourselves of the appointed mode of having the stains of guilt washed from our consciences, and by walking in newness and holiness of life. In the tenderness and ardour of their affection we should see the measure of our love to God and man.

To this holy state, indeed, we cannot ourselves attain. But God has promised his directing, aiding, and sanctifying grace to all who feel their need of it, humbly depend upon it, diligently seek it, and faithfully improve it. Thus we may become as little children; and unless we do—it is the unalterable declaration of him whose word is the law of the universe—we cannot be saved.

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Having thus brought to a close an humble effort to contribute to a Christian improvement of the Festivals and Fasts of the Church, the Editor feels it his duty to offer an apology for the frequent appearance of these Observations after the days to which they re-

spectively belong. It is due to the Publishers to say that the fault is, in no degree, to be attributed to them. That the Editor has incurred it, has been owing to the multiplicity of other duties which have constantly presented claims upon his time and care. He would hope, however, that whatever tendency the Observations may have to answer the end proposed by them will not be, on this account, rendered less effectual.

In the course of his labours in this line, there have occasionally come to the knowledge of the Editor, objections to this series of remarks, on the ground that notices of festivals do not present that novelty which is essential to popularity. The objections have been entirely disregarded, from a conviction that, although as many might not be *pleased*, more would be *substantially edified*, by the habit of pursuing, as much as may be, the order of religious reflection, and the method of devotion, suggested by the appointments of the Church; and by being reminded of the tendency of those appointments to direct the mind to meditation on the leading principles of evangelical doctrine and order, which may be proved from Scripture, and were the characteristics of the Church in its primitive and purest days.

He has also heard of the Observations' having been spoken of as an useless appendage to the Journal, as being, probably, a mere repetition of what has been so often said on the hackneyed subject of the Festivals and Fasts. He acknowledges that he has, for many years, found both improvement and gratification, in turning his attention to the pious efforts which have been made to recommend the observance of these days to the members of the Church, and to enlarge on the various topics they respectively suggest. He deems it proper, however, to say, that he is not conscious of having borrowed any particular train of remark, or presented any thing which may not fairly claim to be considered original.

The Editor now feels himself compelled to resign that character. He

would be much misunderstood, however, if deemed to take this step from any diminution of interest in the Christian Journal. The principles of which it is the avowed supporter are too dear to him, and its instrumentality in disseminating religious intelligence, too important, in his estimation, to admit of this. He finds, however, upon fair experiment, that he cannot retain the responsibility of its regular appearance. The Publishers will, henceforth, be the Editors; and, it is most sincerely hoped, that they will find that aid in prosecuting their undertaking to which the importance of the work, and their efforts thus to serve the Church, entitle them; and which ought to be expected from a portion of Zion so highly favoured as the City and Diocese of New-York.

#### Ordination and Confirmations.

ON the 6th of December, the Right Rev. Bishop Hobart held an Ordination and Confirmation at St. George's Church, Hempstead. Divine Service was celebrated by the Rev. Seth Hart, Rector of said Church, and a Sermon preached by the Bishop, to a numerous congregation. On this occasion the Bishop admitted Mr. James P. F. Clarke to the holy order of Deacons, and confirmed thirty persons. On the Sunday following, the 10th of December, the Bishop visited Christ Church, North-Hempstead, and confirmed thirteen persons.

#### A Christmas Hymn.

(From the New-York Magazine, 1797.)

HARK what glad sounds the dreary deserts cheer,  
And whisper peace to man's enraptured ear!  
O'er Bethlem's city see what glories rise!  
What hues, celestial, paint the bending skies!

A Saviour born!—ye balmy winds that blow,  
Waft the glad tidings Earth's wide empire through:  
Ye roving clouds, ye waters as ye roll,  
Bear the sweet burden to the farthest pole:

Tell mourning man, his days of grief are o'er,  
The sigh of sorrow shall be heard no more;  
On wings of *Peace*, see God's own Son descend,  
To pay our *ransom*, and become our *friend*.  
What love surpassing fill'd his heavenly mind!  
With joyful haste he flew to *lost* mankind,  
Assumed our nature, sinner's place supply'd,  
*Lived* for our peace, and for our pardon died.  
Then, O my soul, thy dear Redeemer love,  
*He* left for *thee*—the seat of bliss above;  
*He* bought for *thee*—salvation with his blood;  
*He* reconciled *thee*—to an angry *God*!  
ALWIN.

#### For the Christian Journal.

#### HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Great God! who reign'st above the sky,  
And guid'st the orbs which roll on high,

To mark time's ample round;

Before thy throne thy sons appear,  
To praise thee for another year,

With love and mercy crown'd.

Our years recede—they're but a span,  
Which measures all the life of man,

But *thine* for ever last;

On thee depends our fleeting breath,  
By thee we're shielded safe from death,  
And judgment's direful blast.

Since time with us began to move,  
We've dwelt beneath Almighty love,

From dangers all secure.

O love! unbounded as his name,  
Enkindle in our breasts a flame,

Which ever shall endure!

In regions brighter than the sun,  
We shall reside when we have done

With this all changeful scene;

And there in raptures now unknown,  
We'll chant thy praises round thy throne,  
Where mercy smiles serene.

And e'en this vale, where sorrows roll,  
And numerous woes surround the soul,

Shall echo to thy praise;

For here thy cheering grace pervades,  
And casts a radiance o'er the shades,  
Our drooping hearts to raise.

Blest with thy smiles, we shall not fear,  
Though this should prove the last *New Year*  
Which we shall ever see;

For when time's ocean shall be crost,  
And days, and months, and years are lost,  
We'll dwell, our *God*, with thee.

WERTER.

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